■ Entertainment / A2-4

Coco Lee believes in power of image

■ Sports / A25

UP Maroons tame NU Bulldogs for 3-0 start

■ World / A12

Fuel truck bomb attack kills 70 in Iraq

■ Business / B1

Special Report: Go family faces uphill battle in Equitable-PCIB brawl

■ Lifestyle / D4

Philippine ivory craft is part of world art history

Text messaging Army's indispensable tool in war

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CAMP AQUINO, Tarlac City—Thanks to the wonders of text messaging, Filipino soldiers battling a 36-year-old communist insurgency are overcoming a communications handicap in one of the world's poorly equipped armies.

TEXT/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Whale death revives calls for Subic park's closure

By Blanche S. Rivera

ANIMAL lovers are enlisting the help of environment and health officials to save the two remaining false killer whales kept in a marine park in Subic Bay, along with dolphins and sea lions, after another juvenile whale used for the park's shows died last week.

WHALE/ A4

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Monday, July 18, 2005 ★★ 62 pages / 6 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 222 P18

website: www.inq7.net

DO IT WITH A SMILE. President Arroyo asks photographers to keep distance during Mass at the Ermita Church.

ERIK ARAZAS

8th Cabinet exec resigns

'Unsolicited' PR plan upsets Afable

By Christine O. Avendaño

ANOTHER member of the Cabinet has resigned, bringing to eight the number of secretaries who have quit irrevocably as President Macapagal-Arroyo faces a political crisis fueled by allegations that she stole the election last year.

Silvestre Afable stepped down as the President's communications director, but opted to stay on as the government's chief negotiator with the Moro National Liberation Front, a group fighting for an independent Islamic homeland in Mindanao. *(See related story on Page A5.)*

"I will continue to be chief negotiator but no longer in the Cabinet as communications director," Afable told The Associated Press yesterday.

Afable told reporters in a text message that he had resigned on July 6, two days before the resignation of seven Cabinet members and three agency heads, who demanded that Ms Arroyo step down because, according to them, she has been crippled by the election scandal and has lost her ability to govern.

The group, now collectively known as the "Hyatt 10" for the name of the hotel where its members announced their mass resignation, has called on former colleagues to join them.

Before Afable's resignation became public, Teresita "Ging" Deles, former presidential adviser on the peace process and member of the "Hyatt 10," said Friday that more Cabinet officials had submitted their irrevocable resignations, "but they are not immediate."

Afable, a former spokesperson of Ms Arroyo, did not explain why he gave up one of his posts, but a Cabinet member confirmed an INQUIRER story that Afable resigned at a Cabinet meeting on July 5 because he was so upset by the "unsolicited" presentation of a communication plan by Marita Jimenez.

Jimenez used to be the President's adviser for flagship projects but is now serving as alternate executive director for the Philippines at the Asian Development Bank.

Her plan was to present Ms Arroyo as a friendlier, more empathetic person in an attempt to improve her dire popularity ratings.

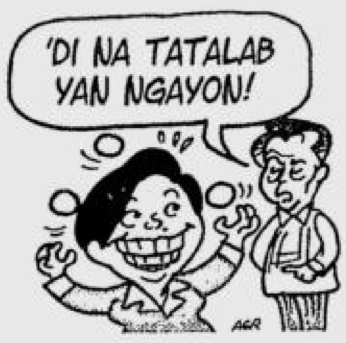
"The desired image will strike a balance between projecting a president resolute about carrying out her job 'to deliver basic service' and taking care not to appear like a stern taskmaster," a Palace source earlier said on condition of anonymity.

Ms Arroyo is perceived by the public as aloof and lacking a common touch. While known to be very hard-working, aides say she suffers from an image of being arrogant and insincere.

8TH CABINET/ A8

EDWIN BACASMAS

EX-SECRETARY Silvestre Afable Jr. will remain as chief government negotiator with the MNLF.


'DI NA TATALAB YAN NGAYON!
AGR

Cha-cha won't solve RP woes, says CBCP head

By Raj Padilla
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The newly elected president of the influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) yesterday slammed as "cosmetic" moves to amend the Constitution without changes in the "warped and wobbling" values of the current crop of leaders.

In an exclusive interview with the INQUIRER, Archbishop Angel Lagdameo of Jaro narrated how the 81 members of the CBCP "painfully" listened to "125 interventions" before they issued a statement on July 10, staying away from mounting calls for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo over allegations she stole last year's election.

Ms Arroyo has apologized for talking during the balloting with an election official in a telephone conversation that was tapped, but has adamantly denied committing fraud.

Explaining the bishops' position, Lagdameo said the prelates wanted the President "to examine herself and to institute reforms in the graft-ridden institutions of the government."

Lagdameo said what government officials needed at this time was a change of heart—a radical adoption of correct values in governance from the President down to barangay officials.

He said the CBCP was not even convinced that changing the Constitution now would solve the country's problems.

"If people in leadership are products of a system with warped and wobbling values, what can we expect but to have a warped

CHA-CHA/ A9

LEADERS must change their "warped values," new CBCP head Archbishop Angel Lagdameo urges.

JESS YUSON

Solons twit Gloria on makeover

By TJ Burgonio and Michael Lim Ubac

SHE CAN wear a happy face, put on a cheerful smile, and even do a jig, but no amount of image makeover will restore the people's trust in her or reverse her political destiny, lawmakers said yesterday.

Opposition senators twitted President Macapagal-Arroyo for resorting to what they said were public relations gimmicks to portray herself as a "people-friendly" leader amid allegations that she was involved in electoral fraud.

The stunt was superficial, if not belated, they said.

"That's a cosmetic solution, but it won't have any effect. The allegations are far too serious," Sen. Sergio Osmeña said in an interview. "In the eyes of the people, she has lost her credibility and moral ascendancy to govern."

"She can smile or dance, but people won't believe her anymore. It's too little, too late."

Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson likened Ms Arroyo to a sponge.

"You press a dirty sponge to remove dirty water, but once you release your hold, the dirt is sucked up back to where it belongs," Lacson said.

Himself mincing no words, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said: "At her age, it's

SOLONS/ A4

Gap between Metro Manila, provinces works in favor of GMA

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

FAST-TRACK solutions to end the crisis engulfing the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo offer little promise of an early resolution of the political impasse.

With resignation unlikely in the short term as the President stonewalls in Fortress Malacañang, this means the nation will be hostage to a state of siege and uncertainty until the stalemate is broken. By what means it's hard to say.

The "prayer rally" at the Luneta on Saturday visibly produced a larger turnout than the anti-Arroyo demonstration in Makati City last week.

Based on police estimates, no less than 100,000 people thronged the Luneta compared to the 40,000 people at Makati, who stepped up their call for Ms Arroyo's resignation. Both sides have accused each other of buying the attendance of demonstrators who were reportedly trucked to the rally sites.

Given that both sides employed the same tricks used in massing people at *"miting de avance,"* the show of strength by both camps was more than election entertainment.

The crisis is a deadly game—a fight to the finish over who controls the streets. What the rival rallies really told us is that the Arroyo administration, because of the resources stemming from the advantages of its incumbency, has shown a better capacity to mobilize a large turnout.

Saturday's rally also shows

GAP BETWEEN/ A22

Opposition unfazed by pro-GMA rally

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and Tarra V. Quismundo

HAVING seen how the other side can also muster big crowds, the opposition is going back to the drawing board.

It is not only planning more rallies but also opening new fronts in its campaign to force the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo, opposition spokespersons said yesterday.

"We will have another rally definitely. We are also preparing other activities this week," United Opposition (UNO) member and San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito said in a phone interview.

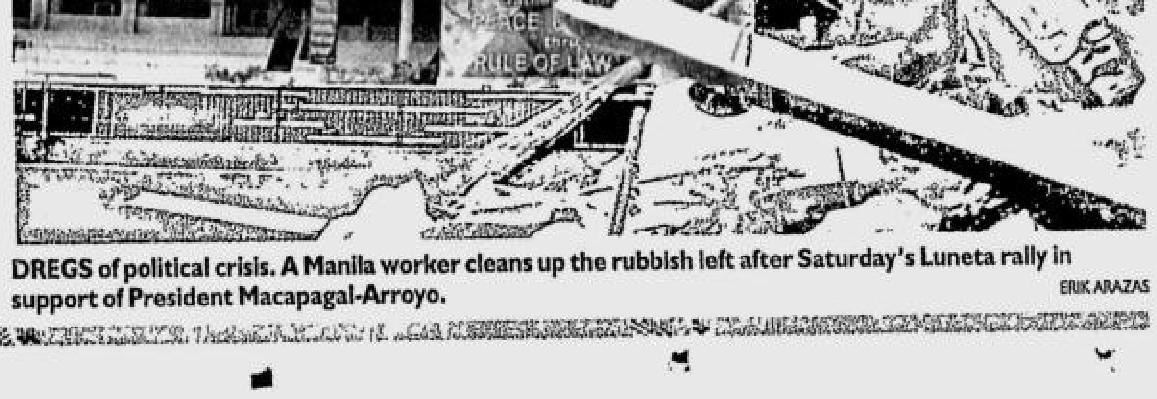
"Maybe during the Sona (State of the Nation Address). We plan to have a counter-Sona," the son of disgraced former President Joseph Estrada added.

Ejercito said the opposition was unperturbed by the "prayer rally" at Luneta Park the other day staged by Ms Arroyo's supporters, which drew a crowd said to be bigger than the 40,000 who attended the Arroyo-resign demonstration staged in Makati by her opponents three days earlier.

"Mass actions will continue, but we are now looking at all options where we could capitalize to remove her from power," said Lito Anzures, spokesperson of UNO chair and Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay.

He said these included gathering evidence to strengthen an im-

OPPOSITION/ A22



DREGS of political crisis. A Manila worker cleans up the rubbish left after Saturday's Luneta rally in support of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

ERIK ARAZAS

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Moderate to occasionally strong winds blowing from the southwest will prevail over the rest of Luzon and coastal waters of these areas will be moderate to occasionally rough. Elsewhere, winds will be light to moderate blowing from the southwest with slight to moderate seas.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: ERIKA A. SARMIENTO, PDI RESEARCH/07/18/05

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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PNP fears leftists in coalition

By Luige A. del Puerto

UNLIKE the middle class, it's not People Power-fatigue that has kept the police from intervening in the current political crisis, but their fear of leftists.

According to a ranking intelligence officer, top police officials are reluctant to intervene in the political crisis in a way that would hasten the downfall of President Macapagal-Arroyo because of fear it would lead to the entry of leftists in the proposed coalition government.

"The Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces are opposed to a democratic coalition government (peopled) by the extreme left and the political opposition," the officer said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The officer warned that if this happened, the military and the police would be forced to intervene.

"If the democratic coalition government that is the version of the left becomes imminent, the AFP and PNP would move to save democracy," he said.

Other senior police officials share his view.

"It's the entry of the left in a new government that got the PNP worrying," one of them said.

A similar scenario was echoed by the Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabayan last week.

RAM had threatened to "move in" if constitutional processes were not observed by those clamoring for Ms Arroyo's ouster.

The intelligence officer said the PNP now sees a very strong alliance between the left, the opposition politicians, and the radical sector of the church—something that is far different from the situation prevailing during Edsa 2.

This would explain why junior and senior officers have so far adhered closely to the chain of command, he added.

"There have been no significant information to indicate restiveness among junior officers. The opposition has supporters among the middle grade and a few senior officers, but they have a distinct fence setter mentality," he said.

The officer also warned that the PNP and AFP would intervene if national security were compromised or if there were intense anarchy on the streets.

But whether the military and the police will continue to support Ms Arroyo or withdraw support in favor of a constitutional successor, the two institutions will always act as one, he said.

When the AFP abandoned former Joseph Estrada in 2001, the PNP followed suit shortly.

Another senior official earlier said the situation in the PNP today is different from the one that existed four years ago, when an aborted impeachment trial and a popular uprising ousted Estrada and catapulted Ms Arroyo to the presidency.

"There are no groupings now unlike before," said the official, a head of a sizable unit in the PNP. "Even during the impeachment trial of Estrada, there were already anti-Estrada groups and they were very vocal."

Two major anti-Estrada factions existed then in the PNP—the Ebdane and Mendoza camps, he said.

OUST
GLORIA

MILITANT groups stage a protest rally along Baywalk in Manila.

ERIK ARAZAS

Impeachment trial puts senators in a dilemma

By TJ Burgonio

WITH THE impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo gaining support in both Houses of Congress, senators are suddenly confronted with this dilemma: Can they transcend party alliances during an impeachment trial?

If ever the complaint prospers and is transmitted to the upper chamber for the impeachment trial, the real challenge to lawmakers would be to vote based on the merits of the evidence, and not along party lines, senators said yesterday.

"If ever there will be an impeachment trial, it should be nonpartisan. Obviously we can't avoid the biases of some people," opposition Sen. Sergio Osmeña III said in an interview.

Any verdict, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon stressed, should be based on the merits of evidence that would be presented against the President during the impeachment trial.

Sen. Manuel "Mar" Roxas II agreed with his colleagues, saying, "In case of impeachment, the senators will be wearing an independent hat... and will judge the case based on merits."

The impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo had also gained the support of Senators Roxas, Joker Arroyo, Manuel Villar Jr., Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Juan Flavier, Richard Gordon and Ramon Magsaysay Jr.

Senate President Franklin Drilon, Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan and Biazon, who had joined the clamor for the President's resignation, had also expressed support for the impeachment process.

Like Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson, however, said that the "less painful option" for the President was to step down from the presidency.

A vote by a third of the 236-man House or 78 votes, would lead to the automatic transmittal of the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate. Between 75 and 80 congressmen had reportedly voiced support for the impeachment complaint as of last Thursday. Opposition lawmakers had listed some 100 offenses by the President to back this up.

However, Ilocos Sur Rep. Salacnib Baterina said that the lone comment of former Commission on Elections chair Christian Monsod could be the death knell to the impeachment complaint.

Monsod, who also chaired the National Movement for Free Elections, said in a television interview that "a mere conversation with an elections official is not unlawful."

Baterina, rumored to be the head of the soon-to-be formed legal team tasked to defend Ms Arroyo should the impeachment case prosper in the House, agreed with Monsod.

"His statement merits the junking of the impeachment complaint since the case is prompted mainly on the strength of the so-called 'Gloriagate' tapes featuring the President's alleged conversations with an elections official," said Baterina.

If the opposition succeeds in removing Ms Arroyo from office, that means giving the presidency on a silver platter to Vice President Noli de Castro, Sen. Joker Arroyo made this assessment as the country's second impeachment case in five years looms with the opening of Congress next week.

Arroyo, who played a key role as House prosecutor in the historic impeachment of President Joseph Estrada in 2000, said the prospects of the impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo could be "very uncertain." *With Michael Lim Ubac and Juliet Labog-Javellana*

'I expect the worst'—Drilon

By Raj Padilla
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—After turning against President Macapagal-Arroyo, Senate President Franklin Drilon now expects the worst to be thrown at him.

Aside from the possibility of losing the Senate presidency, Drilon believed that he would be subjected to a witch-hunt that could expose him to more character attacks aimed at putting him in a bad light.

Speaking over TV public affairs program "Reklamo Publiko" and "MBC-Aksyon Radyo" here yesterday, Drilon said administration congressmen are now prying into the P6.2-billion Iloilo international airport project, now under construction in central Iloilo, in the hope they could find something against him.

But Drilon said they are bound to fail.

"I can stand on my record of public service in Iloilo and anywhere in the country. Tell me if I have recommended a single contractor, if I have purchased a single land around the site, if I have received a single-peso commission from anybody there..." Drilon said.

The government airport project is financed by a loan from the government of Japan under the Obuchi Fund. Contracted in August 2000, the loan carries an interest rate of .75 percent and is payable in 40 years.

Drilon said he could have acquired lands around the site in Sta. Barbara and Cabatuan towns as early as 2000 when nobody knew that a multi-billion airport would be constructed there, but he did not.

"I don't even have a house here. The one in Molo, Iloilo City belongs to my parents," he said.

Drilon appealed to the President and her people to spare the Iloilo airport project if they have plans to get even with him.

"Do not make the Iloilo airport a victim of our political conflict. This is for the good of the Ilonggos who gave you more than half a million vote-margin in the last elections," he said.

A House committee is currently investigating alleged irregularities in the construction of the airport

Police brace for protests during Sona

THE CROWD that broke into the Department of Agriculture building on Friday was just "a glimpse" of how things could shape up during President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address on July 25, a top police official said.

What happened is foremost in the mind of Police Director Vidal Querol when he meets military officials and the security officers of Congress on Wednesday for the third coordinating conference for the SONA.

Querol sees a bigger and rowdier demonstration compared to the pro-administration rally at the Luneta Park on Saturday.

"(It's going to be) a lot bigger definitely," said Querol, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office.

The NCRPO is fielding up to 15,000 policemen in Metro Manila on July 25.

These include around 1,000 antiriot personnel from the Armed Forces's National Capital Region Command.

"In Batasan alone, we will have at least 5,000 antiriot cops," he said.

"I warn militant groups not to commit violence on SONA day. I will not allow anarchy nor mob rule to govern the day. The despicable raid of DA and DAR offices, if both serve as indicators of what militant groups will be capable of doing, I will use the full force of the law to neutralize vandalism and anarchy," Querol said. *Luige A. del Puerto*

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Pichay debunks rumors of Garcillano leaving RP

By Michael Lim Ubac and Nikko Dizon

GARCILLANO

HE'S everywhere but nowhere to be found.

That's the trouble with former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano whose disappearance following the release of the "Hello Garci" tapes has spawned countless rumors of his great escape on a daily basis.

Yesterday, there was a flurry of text messages that Garcillano had left for Singapore Thursday on a Subic Lear Jet piloted by Art Santos.

A check with the Air Transportation Office and other airports in the country proved that what could have been Garcillano's great escape turned out to be a hoax.

"He's here... unless he knows how to fly a Lear jet?" said Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay yesterday, explaining that although he didn't know the exact whereabouts of the now famous phone pal of President Macapagal-Arroyo, "there was no reason or indication that he had left town."

Pichay phoned flight captain Israel Camino, a consultant for ATO, who said that a Subic Air Lear jet (Lear 35) RP-C1426 indeed left the country on July 14 from a private hangar at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia)—not Subic.

On board were pilot Art Santos, co-pilot Willy Bautista and mechanic Ben Hafalla. There was no Garcillano in the manifesto, or any one else besides the three flight personnel, Camino said.

The aircraft went straight to Singapore on a "maintenance checkup," according to Camino who said further verification showed that the aircraft was being maintained by Jet Maintenance in Singapore.

A check made by the INQUIRER with its own aviation sources revealed that a Lear jet registered as RP-C 1426, owned by Subic International Air Charter, Inc., left for Singapore at 6 p.m. on July 14 and was scheduled to be back in Puerto Princesa, Palawan, the next day.

The Lear jet departed from its own hangar at the General Aviation Area, beside the Manila Domestic Airport, the source said.

According to a required document for general aviation flights, which the source showed to the INQUIRER, the plane was scheduled to land on a secondary airport in Singapore called Seletar, near the boundary of Malaysia.

The purpose of the trip was listed as "company flight," and the plane was indeed piloted by Capt. Arthur Santos and two unnamed companions, most likely the co-pilot and mechanic, the source said.

Quoting the document, the source said there were no passengers on the flight.

It would be impossible not to include the number of passengers in the document, according to the source, because that would be a violation of Air Transportation Office (ATO) regulations.

The Inquirer was able to talk to Superintendent Arnulfo Taberdo, who as chief of the 1st Police Center Aviation Security (PCAS) at the Naia, signs the aircraft's Philippine National Police (PNP) exit clearance.

Taberdo confirmed that he signed the exit clearance of the said Lear jet on July 14, but he said the names of passengers were not required to be forwarded to him.

"We just check the veracity of the flight and make sure there's nothing illegal about the flight," Taberdo said.

The only time the police could stop a passenger from leaving is when there is a hold-departure order from the court, he added.

If GMA resigns, Noli won't last long–Joma

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—Communist Party of the Philippines founder Jose Maria Sison yesterday predicted that Vice President Noli de Castro would not be able to stay long in power should President Macapagal-Arroyo be impeached and be forced to step down.

"He (De Castro) would dig his own political grave by following the same Arroyo policies dictated by the US and the IMF, World Bank and WTO. The people would reject him as one complicit in electoral fraud, corruption and other high crimes of the Arroyo regime," Sison said in an e-mailed statement.

He added that the broad masses of the people would not be satisfied with the replacement of one reactionary president by another through whatever method.

Sison stressed that prolonging the Arroyo regime by any means was nothing but an aggravation of the socioeconomic and political crisis of the ruling system of big *compradors* and landlords.

The anti-Arroyo rally last Wednesday brought together various factions from the leftists to old Marcos and Estrada followers.

Militant and political opposition groups were able to muster an estimated 30,000-40,000 in the latest protest rally held in the country's financial district.

However, this was short of the 50,000 they had originally promised, forcing the opposition to concede that Arroyo would not be forced from power through street protests.

The opposition camp vowed instead to concentrate their efforts on impeaching her when Congress reopens next week.

Sison, however, assailed the notion that people were giving up on protest actions and would just concentrate on the impeachment proceedings in Congress or a "Truth Commission."

"The regime is terrified that the broad united front would soon be able to muster at least 500,000 at some focal point in the National Capital Region, expose the inability of Arroyo to govern, and encourage the military and the police forces to withdraw their support from her," he said.

Sison added that Malacañang had also become jittery because the political opposition in Congress was now close to gathering the 79 signatures required to transmit the article of impeachment to the Senate for trial.

Sison also scoffed at pro-administration officials, police and even the press for belittling the series of anti-Arroyo mass actions but exaggerating the number of participants in the government-sponsored rally on Saturday at Rizal Park.

Anti-GMA protesters roughed up in Jeddah – Migrante

By Leila B. Salaverria

A MILITANT labor group has accused officials and personnel of the Philippine consulate in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, of beating up Filipinos there preparing to stage a protest rally against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Migrante chair Connie Bragas-Regalado said one of their officials and three members were hurt during a scuffle at the Philippine consulate in Jeddah on Saturday afternoon.

Migrante, which organizes overseas Filipino workers, and some 30 members of the Overseas Filipinos, Families and Advocates: Unite and Rise to Oust Gloria (OUTRAGE-Jeddah) were preparing to dialogue with consulate officials on the plight of stranded workers there and to call on the President to resign.

Injured were Migrante deputy secretary general Leo Legaspi, Irene Mahinay, Jackiline Pakpakin and Jessica Hapo. Legaspi was wounded in the ear, while one of Pakpakin's toenails had to be removed. Mahinay and Hapo allegedly received blows to the abdomen area, according to Migrante.

Quoting reports received from Jeddah, Bragas-Regalado said case officers and security guards of the Philippine Overseas Labor Office there started to punch Legaspi while his group was taking out their placards bearing messages against the President.

When Legaspi's companions tried to shield him from his attackers, they too, suffered injuries, she said.

Bragas-Regalado castigated the labor office personnel for their actions and called for their prosecution. She said their actions reflect the present administration's treatment of OFWs and one of the reasons Ms Arroyo should be ousted.

"This is one more reason to oust Macapagal-Arroyo, [so we can] push for a transition council to effect massive reforms in the diplomatic corps," Bragas-Regalado said in a statement.

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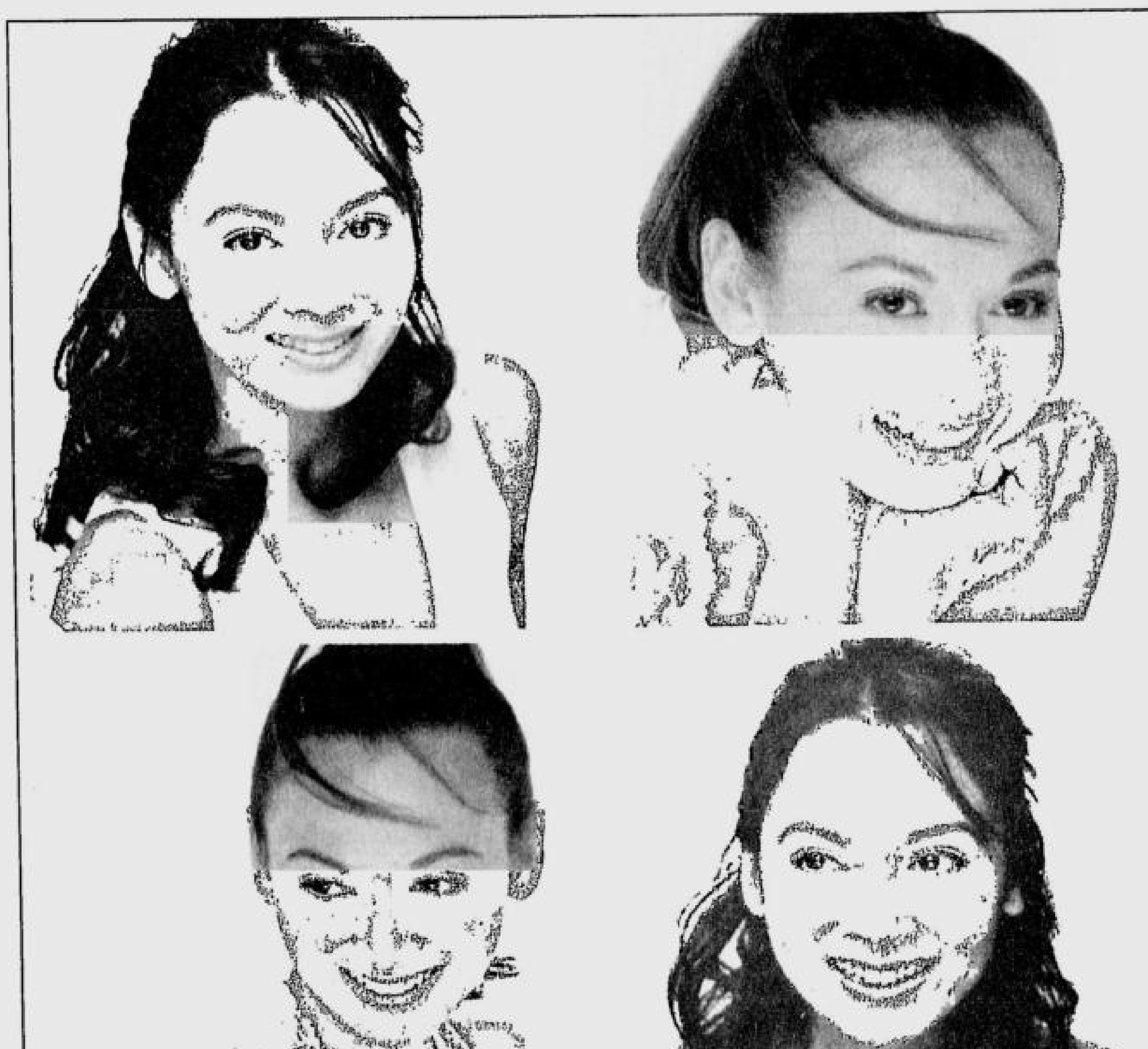

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Whale death revives calls for Subic park's closure

From page A1

The Philippine Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) and the Earth Island Institute-Philippines have sought the closure of the popular Ocean Adventure park, which is partly operated by the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

The death of Hook, a 13-year-old female false killer whale *(Pseudorca crassidens)*, on July 8 captured international attention and revived the campaign against the use of marine mammals for shows.

Hook's death, which was reported by Ocean Adventure officials last week, was featured on CNN on July 11, according to the EII-Philippines.

Hook is the third whale to die in captivity at the Ocean Adventure Park since it opened in 2001. Coral, 11 years old, died in January last year, while Deuce, a 9-year-old male false killer whale, died in July 2001.

All died of gastro-intestinal illness.

Cruelty

"The height of animal cruelty is to deprive an animal of its life. In the wild, false killer whales live up to 62 years of age, but confinement in Ocean Adventure will make sure that none of these animals live to reach maturity," EII coordinator Trixie Concepcion said.

A park official failed to issue a statement when contacted by the INQUIRER yesterday.

Ocean Adventure is operated by the Subic Bay Marine Exploratorium (SBME), a joint venture between the SBMA and a group of Americans.

SBME imported the five false killer whales from the Beijing Aquarium in 2001, and eight sea lions and four bottle-nose dolphins from Japan, one of only two countries still engaged in whaling.

Concepcion said the death of three of the five false killer whales in the park proved that whales and dolphins could not survive long in captivity.

Infections

Placing dolphins and whales, which roam the sea for hundreds of kilometers daily, in captivity causes an abrupt change in their systems that disrupts their behavior. This change could affect their immune system and make them more susceptible to infections, the EII said.

Marine experts describe the false killer whale as a small porpoise closely resembling the pilot whale, its close relative.

False killer whales weigh 1.1-2.2 tons and are completely black in color, although some "may have a grey patch shaped like an anchor that extends from the lower jaw to the naval and flippers." The males grow to 19 ft (5.7 m) long, and the females grow at a slightly smaller length of 16.3 ft (4.9 m).

They are fast, active swimmers. They are very intelligent and highly trainable, which is why they are displayed in many marine parks. They feed mainly upon squid, octopus and cuttlefish, as well as fish such as cod. They have also been known to feed upon marine mammals.

Death probe

Last week, the EEI and PAWS asked three Cabinet secretaries to investigate the deaths of the marine mammals in Ocean Adventure Park.

In a letter, the two groups urged Environment Secretary Michael Defensor, Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban and Health Secretary Francisco Duque to form a team that will check the park's facilities and its use of marine mammals for amusement.

Ocean Adventure offers "swim with the whales" and dolphin shows, usually to groups of excursionists from Metro Manila.

The EEI and the PAWS filed criminal charges against the SBME board, composed of Americans Timothy Desmond, John Corcoran and Gail Laule, in 2001 for violation of Republic Act No. 8485, or the Animal Welfare Act, and Presidential Decree No. 1586, which mandates the Environmental Impact Statement System.

Exploratorium lacks ECC

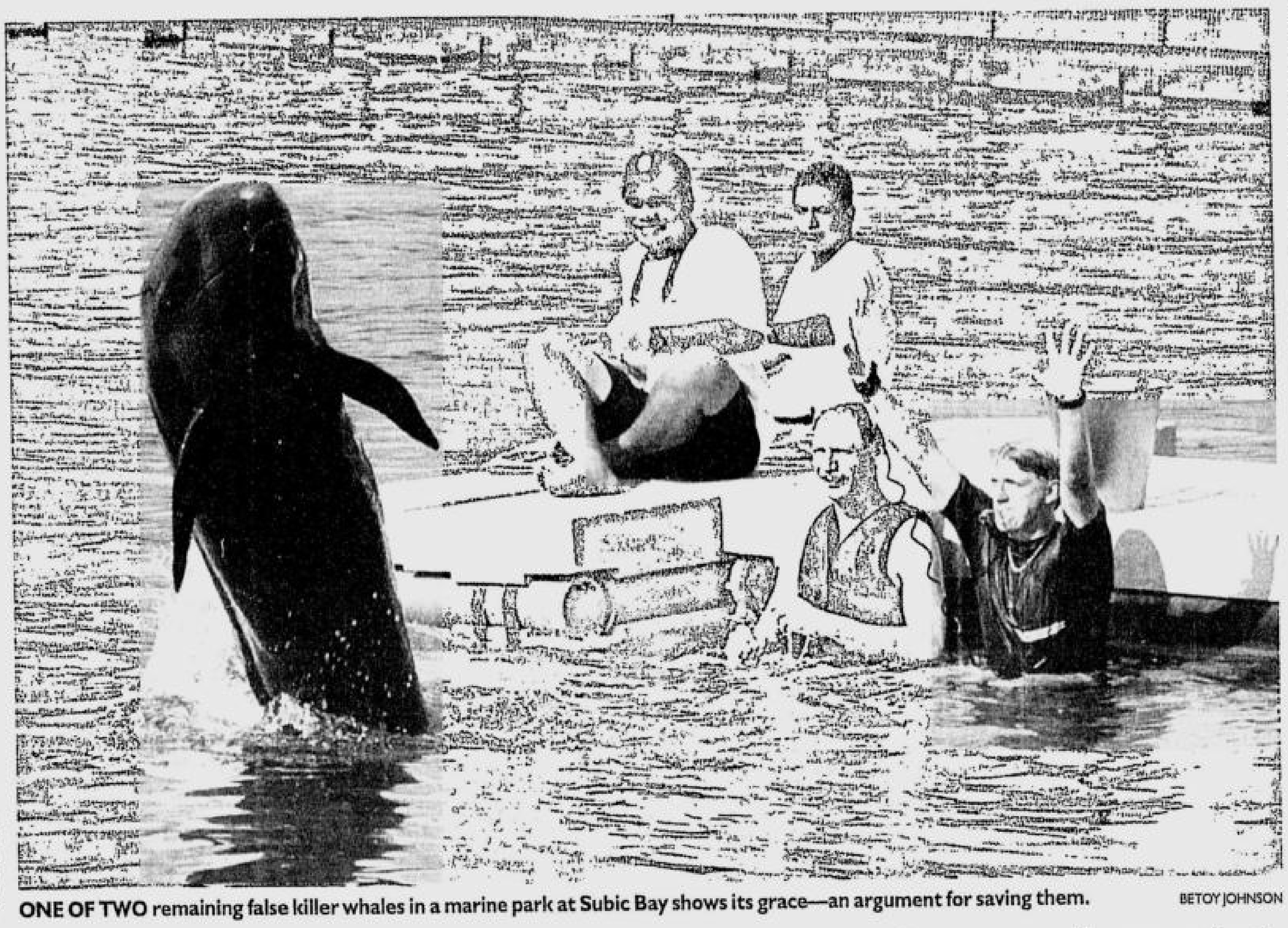
SBME does not have an environmental compliance certificate from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, and is not registered with the Bureau of Animal Industry, according to Concepcion.

"All animal facilities should register with the BAI and the government must have standards for animal use. But there is none yet for marine parks. They're just drafting it now, after years of operation of a marine park," Concepcion said.

Violation of the Animal Welfare Act carries a negligible fine of P5,000 or six months in jail.

The Philippines is among the countries that have denounced the practice of driving up the whales to the shore and capturing them for sale to amusement parks.

An untrained whale could fetch up to $5,000 and a trained marine mammal could go for around $10,000.



ONE OF TWO remaining false killer whales in a marine park at Subic Bay shows its grace—an argument for saving them. BETOY JOHNSON

Solons twit Gloria . . .

From page A1

difficult for an old dog to learn new tricks."

Representatives Joel Villanueva (Cibac), Mujiv Hataman (Anak Mindanao) and Rafael Mariano (Anakpawis) said the so-called communication plan devised by Palace spin doctors to halt the plunge in Ms Arroyo's popularity would fail as did three other Malacañang attempts to reinvent her image.

Hataman, an Islam believer, said Allah "will not hear the prayers of a cheat and a liar."

"We can't solve this crisis through PR (public relations). [She] will again use up taxpayers' money. The only speedy way is to resign after sincerely admitting to the wrongdoing, followed by massive changes in the system," Hataman said.

Lessons from Bible

Villanueva, son of Bangon Pilipinas leader Bro. Eddie Villanueva, told the Jesus Is Lord Christian Fellowship congregation that "everyone can pray but not all are being heard and answered by God."

The young preacher-turned-lawmaker compared Ms Arroyo's PR blitz to an episode involving two mothers fighting over a baby in I Kings 3:16-27, where the fake mother agreed to have the baby cut in half.

He said Ms Arroyo "is the fake President who would rip the nation apart rather than unite it through resignation."

Villanueva also said Christ's teaching that "every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire" would be a self-fulfilling prophecy if Ms Arroyo refused to acknowledge her supposed sins to heaven and the people.

Lessons for all

But he stressed that his message was not directed alone at Ms Arroyo but also at other leaders in the political spectrum who harbored evil motives in calling for her ouster.

Noting that pictures of Ms Arroyo in deep prayer had been splashed on newspapers' front pages, Villanueva quoted Matthew 7:21-23 (New American Bible):

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven."

The "new look" strategy reportedly devised for Ms Arroyo would involve, among others, making her smile more often and become more warm to ordinary folk, like fishermen and street vendors.

The image reinvention was said to be intended to arrest the steep fall in the President's popularity in the wake of allegations linking her to electoral cheating and her family to "jueteng" payola.

No way out

Lacson said the best way to reinvent the presidential image was for Ms Arroyo to have "compunction without pretenses."

"To talk of compunction is to repair the damage she has caused our country. That is resign now. No other way out," said the senator.

"The [other] question is, what will it cost the Filipino taxpayers?"

By refusing to resign and engaging in such gimmicks, Ms Arroyo has only succeeded in "prolonging the agony of the people," Osmeña said.

Mariano said: "Ms Arroyo's lack of political credibility and moral ascendancy to govern cannot be [remedied] overnight. Her rift with the masses has grown wide."

Reinventing Ms Arroyo's image is a "waste of time and taxpayers' money," he said.

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OUR HEARTS are for the President, supporters of Ms Arroyo seemed to say during their Luneta rally. RYAN LIM

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Gov't-MILF peace talks to resume in KL this month

THE PHILIPPINE government and the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front will resume peace talks in Malaysia this month despite renewed fighting and a political crisis at home, a rebel spokesperson and a former Cabinet minister said yesterday.

Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, said the Cabinet crisis wouldn't hold up the peace process.

"People in government come and go and we're willing to talk to anybody sitting in Malacañang," Kabalu said, referring to the presidential palace.

Nine Cabinet ministers resigned July 8, including Teresita Deles, presidential adviser to the peace talks with the MILF, and said President Macapagal-Arroyo should step down because of suspicions that she rigged last year's presidential election.

No replacement for Deles has been announced.

Silvestre Afable, who resigned from his Cabinet post as Ms Arroyo's communications director last week, said Sunday he would continue in his role as chief government negotiator in the peace process.

He said the talks will likely resume before the end of July.

Sporadic gunbattles erupted between government troops and Abu Sayyaf and MILF guerrillas Thursday and Friday in the southern province of Maguindanao, killing at least one rebel, Kabalu said.

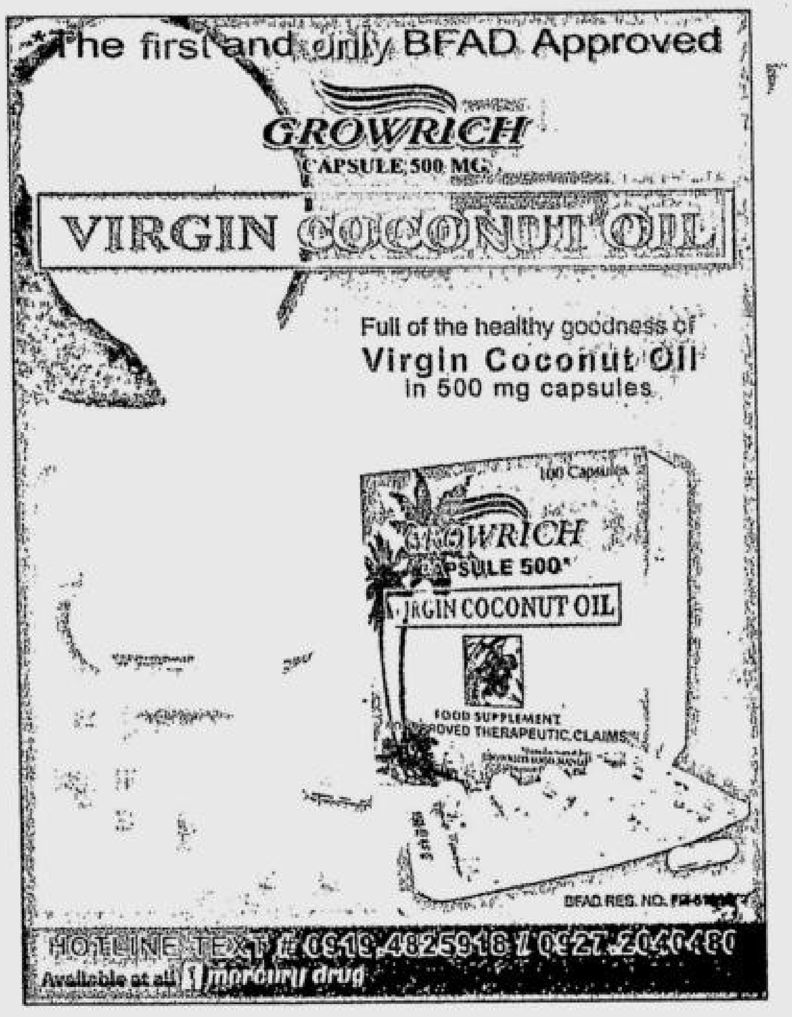
MILF guerrillas opened fire on two helicopters transporting troops to a mountainous area near Talaya town on Friday, wounding one of the soldiers and damaging the aircraft, Air Force spokesperson Lt. Col. Restituto Padilla said.

Padilla said the military had planned the offensive against the Abu Sayyaf and notified the MILF in advance, but the MILF still fired on the helicopter.

Kabalu acknowledged that MILF guerrillas fired at a chopper but said the attack and clashes were sparked when troops advanced on an MILF camp. The MILF would not block any military assault against Abu Sayyaf militants, who may be hiding near its camps, Kabalu said.

Military officials have accused local MILF commanders of providing sanctuary and training ground to the Abu Sayyaf and members of the Jemaah Islamiyah, a regional group linked to al-Qaida.

The MILF has been fighting for an independent Muslim homeland in the southern region of Mindanao for more than three decades. *AP*



GMA appoints Victorino as JBC member

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday appointed retired Justice Raoul V. Victorino of the Sandiganbayan as member of the Judicial and Bar Council representing the private sector.

Hailed as a no-backlog Justice of the Sandiganbayan, Justice Victorino who has the reputation for integrity and probity was chair of the National Ecumenical Consultative Committee and the National Council of Churches in the Philippines.

Multi-awarded as an active religious and civic leader, Justice Victorino occupied sensitive government positions in the executive and legislative branches of government. He was former commissioner of the Land Transportation Commission, Commissioner of the National Telecommunications Commission and Secretary of the Commission on Appointments.

Victorino, a graduate of the UP College of Law, Class '57, also attended a special program for lawyers at Harvard University.

The JBC nominates to the president for appointment all the justices and judges of the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, the Sandiganbayan, the Court of Tax Appeals and judges of the RTC and the MTC.

It is chaired by the Chief Justice as ex-officio chair, the Secretary of Justice.

The regular members of JBC are appointed by the President for a term of four years.

EAPI special program on Vatican

THE EAST Asian Pastoral Institute (EAPI) is offering a special program on the historic achievements of Vatican II. The program, ongoing until December 2005, will review the council's work in the last 40 years and discuss how contemporary Church continues to renew itself in and for the global village of the Third Millennium. Speakers include Fr. Keith Pecklers SJ, Sr. Jan Gray RSM, Fr. Tom Rausch SJ, Fr. John Fuellenbach SVD, Fr. David Hollenbach SJ and Dr. Megan McKenna.

Anyone 28 years old and above with at least three years experience in any form of pastoral service may apply for any module/s (maximum of 5). Each module costs P3,000 which includes the course fee, instructional materials, lunch and two snacks. Interested parties are advised to apply early. For inquiries call The Secretariat of EAPI at (02) 4265901 or e-mail eapisec@admu.edu.ph.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, July 18, 2005
16th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Ex 14:5-18
Gospel: Matthew 12:38-42

Some teachers of the Law and some Pharisees spoke up, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you." Jesus answered them, "An evil and unfaithful people want a sign, but no sign will be given them except the sign of the prophet Jonah. In the same way that Jonah spent three days and three nights in the belly of the monster fish, so will the Son of Man spend three days and three nights in the depths of the earth.

"At the judgment, the people of Niniveh will rise with this generation and condemn it, because they reformed their lives at the preaching of Jonah, and here there is greater than Jonah. At the judgment, the Queen of the South will stand up and condemn you. She came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and here there is greater than Solomon."

Commentary

Now the teachers of the law want a sign from Jesus and he refers to them as an evil and unfaithful people wanting signs. But there will be a sign: the sign of Jonah, swallowed by the whale and spit forth onto land to preach again. The Son of Man will be buried in the earth for three days and will come forth again to life. The Son of Man is a judgment figure from the Book of Daniel who will come in glory to judge the nations justly and when that day comes, the people of Nineveh will condemn this generation because it did not recognize the Son of Man and repent. Have we recognized the Son of Man, the Crucified One who stands in solidarity with the poor, the victimized, those destroyed by violent systems of injustice as the one who will judge us individually and as nations? Will Nineveh rise up and condemn us?

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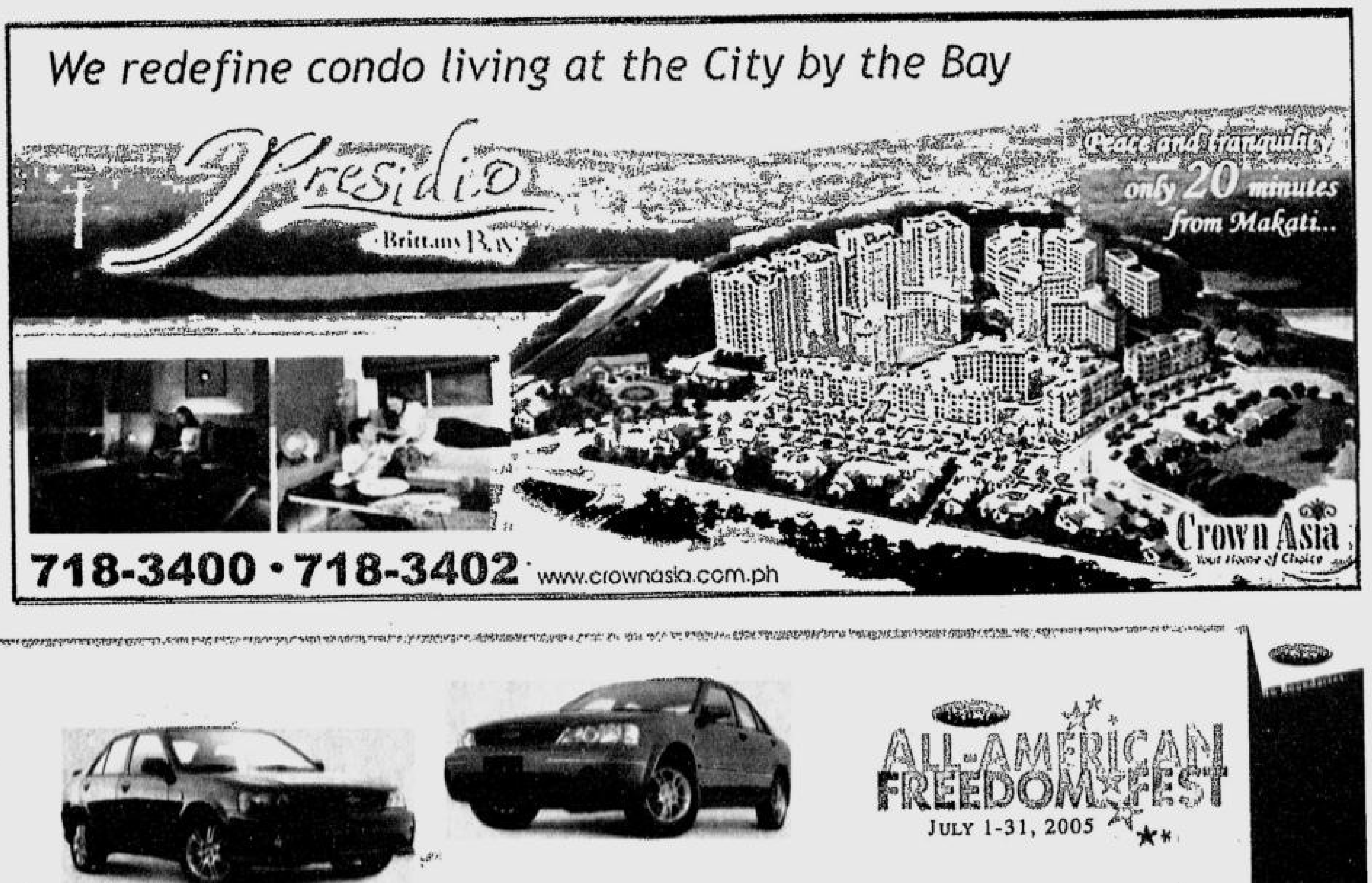

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Data Sources: Office of the President, NEDA, PIA

Controversial handcuffs finally distributed to cops

By Luige A. del Puerto

NINE years later, the controversial handcuffs from a deal that went sour between former Philippine National Police chief Panfilo Lacson and a local supplier have been finally distributed to policemen, according to a ranking police official.

Chief Supt. Ely de la Paz, deputy chief of the PNP logistics unit said the PNP obtained more than 30,000 double-lock handcuffs in April which are now being distributed to police stations nationwide.

The PNP had worked out a deal with the Bureau of Customs that allowed the high-quality Smith and Wesson handcuffs to be declared abandoned, which in turn, allowed them to be finally donated to the police, De la Paz said.

De La Paz worked closely with Customs officials to secure the handcuffs which had been gathering dust in a warehouse since the shipment arrived in the Philippines in the 1990s.

Of the 40,000 or so handcuffs delivered, some 31,200 were in good condition, 1,450 were rusting, and 350 were without keys, a police inventory showed.

The rusted handcuffs could be cleaned, and because each pair has two set of keys, the spare key could be set aside for those without keys, according to De La Paz.

In 2001, businesswoman Blanquita Pelaez sued Lacson in the United States after the latter blocked the payment for the 41,297 pairs of handcuffs worth P16.5 million that she had supplied the PNP in 1996.

Lacson was PNP chief from 1998 to 2001 during the term of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

But Lacson maintained that the contract was illegally amended.

He argued that that B.H. Enterprises, the local supplier of Smith and Wesson products owned by Pelaez, managed to secure an amendment to the contract assigning the payment of importation taxes and duties for the handcuffs to the PNP.

Lacson noted that the original contract signed by PNP chief Recaredo Sarmiento in 1996

did not provide for this. In 1999, however, then Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno and PNP chief Roberto Lastimoso amended the contract through a resolution.

Honoring the amended contract would have cost the government millions of pesos, Lacson said.

"If this is what I get for protecting the public interest, so be it," he had said shortly after learning of the US court's adverse order.

In August 1999, the INQUIRER quoted Pelaez as saying Lacson approached her "to obtain her support and endorsement in his campaign for chief of the PNP" and to assure her that he would effect the payment if he won the appointment.

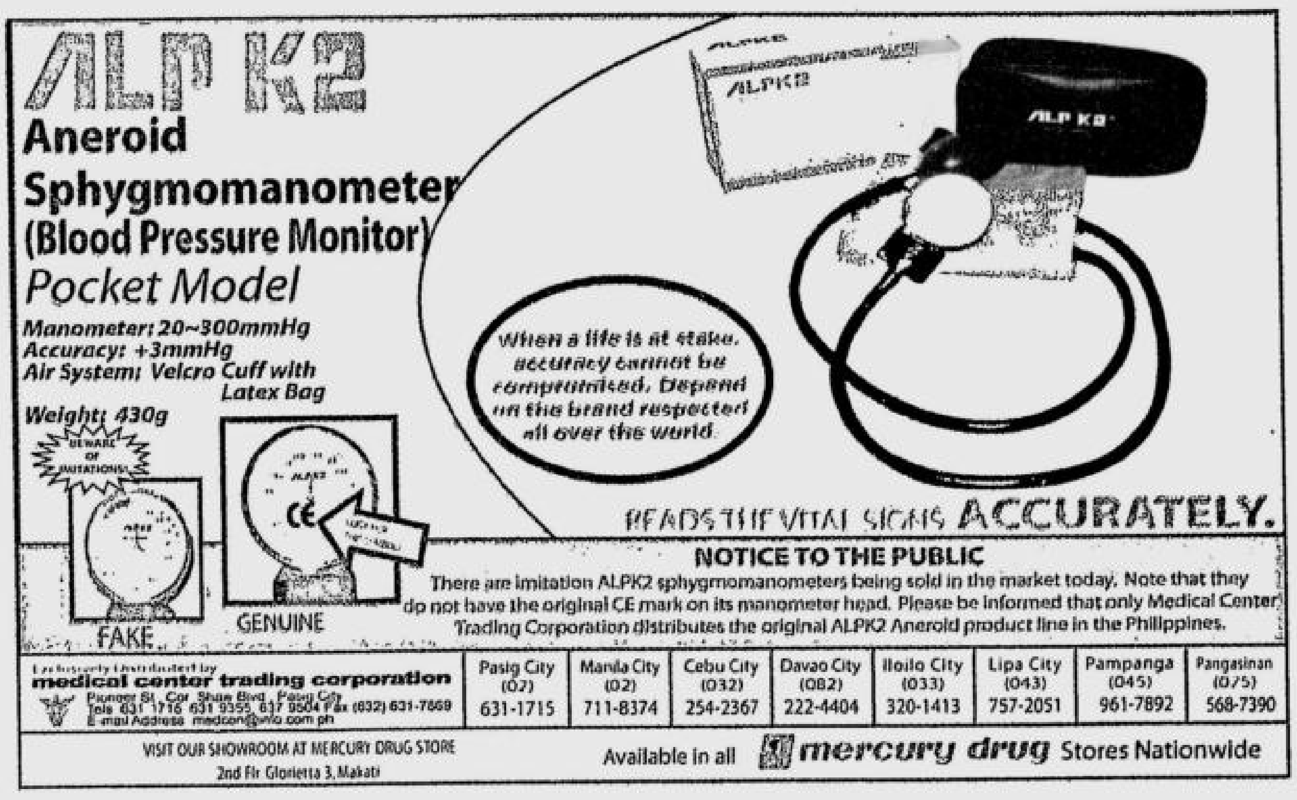
Pelaez charged that Lacson did not make good on his promise for "personal political reasons."

Thus, for years the handcuffs remained in the warehouse and were seemingly forgotten.

Customs had earlier written the PNP seeking the payment of the import taxes and duties. The PNP replied that it had no money, according to De la Paz.

Because no one would pay the taxes, Customs forfeited the shipment in government's favor.

They were then put into auction, but the bidding failed twice. As a result, Customs could now donate the handcuffs to PNP, De la Paz said.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09:50 - 10:30	Keynote: View from SAP, Alan Sedghi, Managing Director, SAP South Asia
10:30 - 11:00	Keynote: View from IBM
11:00 - 12:00	Lunch
12.00 - 01:30	NETWORKING FAIR: Visit booths of Summit exhibitors for live demos, one-on-one discussions, freebies and the chance to win exciting prizes
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DAY TWO - July 27, 2005

08:30 - 09:00	Registration
09:00 - 09:45	SAP Technology Vision: ESA is the Wave of the Future, David Payne, Senior Manager, Market Development, SAP NetWeaver
09:45 - 10:00	Break
10:00 - 12:25	SOLUTION TRACK SESSIONS: Discover how SAP solutions such as Analytics, Customer Relationship Management, NetWeaver Human Capital Management, Supply Chain Management, Supplier Relationship Management and Enterprise Resource Planning can help companies achieve real growth, real success and real profit!
12:30 - 01:30	End of Session/Closing Ceremonies/Lunch
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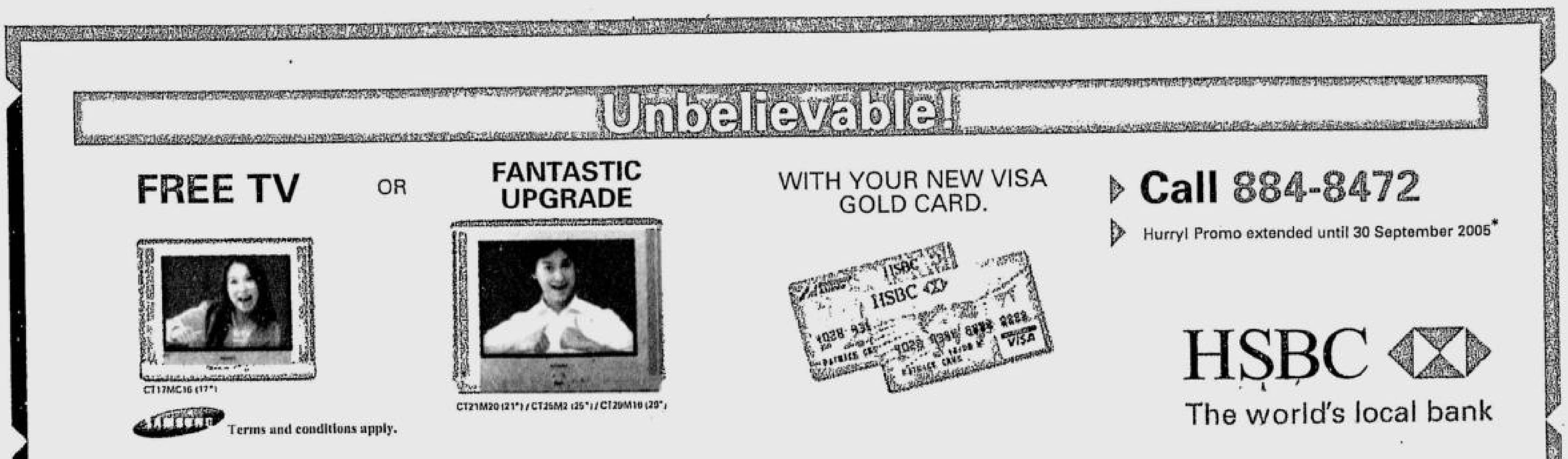
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8th Cabinet exec resigns

From page A1

The Cabinet official, who asked not to be identified, said the communication plan of Jimenez, Ms Arroyo's media coordinator during the 2004 presidential campaign, was rejected outright by the President at the Cabinet meeting.

"She (Jimenez) presented a very amateurish communication plan and claimed that the President approved it," said the official, who was privy to the Cabinet meeting in Malacañang.

But the official said when the President joined the Cabinet meeting later, she told Jimenez that her communication plan was not right.

"Cabinet secretaries were all ridiculing (Jimenez) and her plan," the official said.

The Cabinet official said Jimenez did not even tell Afable about her communication plan.

One part of Jimenez's plan recommended that "each and every Cabinet member" talk to the media about the tape controversy hounding the President in which Ms Arroyo allegedly directed an election official to rig the presidential election.

Secretariat

The official said Jimenez even told Cabinet members she would report to the President every day on their compliance. There was also a plan to set up a secretariat for this.

One of the Cabinet members who did not like the Jimenez plan was Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes, according to the source.

Contacted by phone, Environment Secretary Michael Defensor said that while the Jimenez plan was discussed at the Cabinet meeting, it was "set aside."

Defensor said it was difficult to come up with a communication plan because the attacks against the administration varied every day.

He said he believed that the Palace should respond to the issues as they come but, according to him, it was more important to communicate to the people government efforts in matters of governance.

Charts

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, who was at the meeting when Jimenez presented the plan, said it "was a day-to-day program on how the Cabinet should approach the news and issues."

"It was a PR plan for the Cabinet," he said, noting that Jimenez had used charts to explain her plan.

But the justice secretary said he did not know for sure if the plan was rejected.

In a text message to the INQUIRER yesterday, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said Afable "will continue with the Office of Communications Director until a replacement is named."

The officials who resigned on July 8 and demanded that Ms Arroyo step down were Deles, Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman, Education Secretary Florencio Abad, Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin, Trade Secretary Juan Santos, Land Reform Secretary Rene Villa, National Anti-Poverty Commission Chair Imelda Nicolas, Internal Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno and Customs Commissioner Alberto Lina.

Others, too

Besides the "Hyatt 10," other government executives have quit their posts. Jose Luis Martin Gascon stepped down as education undersecretary for legal affairs, and Arne Ang and Ernesto Ladrido as land reform undersecretaries.

Leonardo Montemayor resigned as chair of the United Coconut Planters Bank-Coconut Industry Investment Fund's Finance and Development Corp.

Ms Arroyo has filled up the posts left by the "Hyatt 10" and other executives.

She has acknowledged that she talked with an election official during the vote count and publicly apologized for the "lapse in judgment."

But she argued she only wanted to protect her votes and did not attempt to manipulate the election results as alleged by the political opposition. She said she was ready to face any impeachment complaint by Congress.

Among those who have sought her resignation were former President Corazon Aquino, an ex-ally and widely regarded as a moral icon. Several business groups and Roman Catholic universities have also asked the President to quit.

With reports from AP and Reuters

Text messaging Army's indispensable tool in war

From page A1

DOMINGUEZ

"For most of our field operatives, text messaging is an indispensable tool that is tried and tested in their operations," said recently retired Lt. Gen. Romeo Dominguez, the former chief of the Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom).

Dominguez said the Nolcom's "successful encounters" in the campaign against guerrillas in the Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Cordillera and Central Luzon since February 2003 were due to text messages.

With thumbs pressing the keypads of their mobile phones, the only modern light gadget available in the battlefield, soldiers were able to send, receive and swap messages containing intelligence and operations information in just a matter of seconds, he said.

Of course, he added, the new technology—also known as the short messaging system or SMS—would have been useless if not for the support of residents who provided the soldiers with information on the activities of rebels in their areas.

Trinity of war

Community involvement, Dominguez said, was one of the pillars of the "Trinity of War," referring to Nolcom's counter-insurgency doctrine of knowing the strengths and weaknesses of the populace, the enemy and the military.

The three-volume "Trinity of War" has become a controversial document after it tagged legal organizations, including some in the media, as fronts of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Dominguez, in Friday's turnover rites at the Nolcom headquarters here, said his men protected the identities of their informants and contacts by using women's names as codes stored in their phones' directories.

But there's a downside to this new mode of communicating, he said.

"The possibility of being duped is always present," he said.

Most of the time, though, the information were verified and proved valuable, he said.

Communist toll

Dominguez said Nolcom records as of July 15 showed that clashes in the four regions covered by the command resulted in the death of 122 rebels and arrest of 197 others.

The records also showed that 349 rebels had surrendered and 483 firearms were recovered from the rebels.

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr., who was guest during the turnover of command at Nolcom, said insurgency and other internal security threats have affected the country's economic performance.

These threats, he said, come from the CPP and its armed wing, the New People's Army, secessionist groups such as the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and breakaway factions of the Moro National Liberation Front, and "terrorist" groups like the Abu Sayyaf and the Jemaah Islamiyah.

Job not complete

"The job is far from being complete," Cruz said.

He said the Philippine Defense Reform Program was being complemented by a P30-billion capability upgrade plan (CUP) in the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Cruz said the CUP would "enhance mobility, firepower, communications, force protection and combat life support."

HOW THE GO FAMILY CONTROLS EPCIB WITH ONLY 25 % EQUITY

- The Go family, which has a stake of only 25.2 percent in EPCIB, has seized control of the bank to the detriment of the majority stockholders.
- This manipulation has already cost GSIS (with 12.15% equity) and SSS (with 29% equity) at least P2.9 billion in unearned income from their total investments of P16 billion in EPCIB. The maneuverings at EPCIB have led to a fall in the average price of EPCIB shares from P96 to less than P50 per share.
- With the GSIS and SSS owning more than 40% of EPCIB, it is only logical and proper that the two government corporations should have a bigger say in running the bank in the interest of their millions of members. Yet the minority group of the Gos has taken control of the bank, putting at risk the interest of the majority shareholders, particularly the GSIS and SSS members.
- The GSIS and SSS investments in EPCIB should entitle the government at least seven seats in the 15-member EPCIB board of directors, yet it is given five seats only. It is highly anomalous that the Gos have five seats also although they own only 25.2 % of the bank. One of the two seats of GSIS in the EPCIB board -- vacated by Justice Regino Teodoro -- was taken over by Ambassador Antonio Basilio, who does not represent the GSIS.
- While the GSIS and SSS contributed P16 billion out of the P32 billion used to buy PCIBank in 1999, the Gos did not put up a single centavo. The other P16 billion was funded by Equitable, including funds of the acquired PCIBank, for which all the shareholders (including GSIS and SSS members) pay interest expenses proportionately.
- The GSIS and SSS are bearing the cost for the questionable investments made by the Go family using the funds of EPCIB but the two government financial institutions do not benefit from these investments, including those made for Treasury Shares.
- The SEC and BSP disqualified Mr. Roberto R. Romulo as a nominee for independent director of EPCIB on the grounds that his affiliations/relationships with EPCIB could interfere with the exercise of his independent judgment. The SEC and BSP discovered that Mr. Romulo chairs a company owned by the Go family (Equicom Systems Management Inc.), thus he could never position himself as an "independent director."
- Yet Mr. Romulo continues to participate and meddle with the affairs of the bank as purported independent director and member of the Nomination Committee of EPCIB. The Chairman of the Board of Directors of EPCIB, Mr. Antonio L. Go, and EPCIB executive vice president and corporate secretary Nilo T. Divina are allowing the continued involvement of Mr. Romulo in the affairs of EPCIB.
- The Go family, through Mr. Romulo, spearheaded and manipulated the disqualification of a number of nominees by the other stockholders to ensure its control of the bank. The Go family has created a "phantom majority" in the EPCIB board to the detriment of the actual majority shareholders.
- The Go family, again with the help of Mr. Romulo, amended the by-laws of the bank, changing the number of votes needed for disqualification of nominees for directorship from two-thirds to simple majority.
- The Gos want to reset/postpone the scheduled Annual Stockholders' Meeting of EPCIB on July 19 in order to perpetuate their hold over the bank. The Gos are even using the disqualification case against EPCIB executive vice president and corporate secretary Nilo T. Divina, their ally, to preserve the status quo through a protracted legal wrangling. The Gos are citing the absence of a corporate secretary as one reason to stop the holding of a stockholders' meeting, and consequently preserve indefinitely their control of EPCIB.
- Mr. Winston F. Garcia, president and general manager of GSIS, and Ms Corazon de la Paz, president of SSS, have expressed their "vehement objection" to any attempt to reset or postpone the Annual Stockholders' Meeting of EPCIB on July 19 because "this is tantamount to fraudulently depriving the stockholders of the Corporation of their right to vote or elect new directors of the Corporation and will result in the present Board of Directors perpetuating themselves unnecessarily in office."
- Acting on a petition by Sysmart (which has a 2.5 % stake in EPCIB), the Court of Appeals on July 13 issued a 60-day temporary restraining order barring the 15-man board of EPCIB from implementing any provision of the bank's amended by-laws. The amended by-laws were earlier nullified by the SEC in November 2004.
- The TRO was sought to prevent the Go family from again packing the 15-man board with their own nominees to perpetuate an "artificial majority" in violation of the SEC rules and regulations and to the detriment of the other stockholders. **It is proper to demand a fair election of officers and members of the board of directors in EPCIB strictly in accordance with the law and corporate and banking regulations for the equal protection and benefit of all the stockholders.**

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Pope Benedict XVI's plea faces severe test in RP

By Christian V. Esguerra

Priests reminded on straying from official path

POPE Benedict XVI's plea for priests to stay away from politics is facing a severe test in the Philippines, where long-haired clerics carried guns in recent years and even now were leading street protests.

Even before Philippine Roman Catholic bishops issued a statement on July 10 reminding prelates of the papal prescription, the Vatican had been quietly calling the attention of those seemingly straying from the official path, Church sources said.

Bishop Antonio Tobias of Novaliches confirmed to the INQUIRER that he had received a telephone call from the Apostolic Nuncio, Antonio Franco, on July 4 while he was attending an assembly of the Kilusang Makabansang Ekonomiya (KME) to remind him that as a bishop, he should not be involved in political activities.

The KME is made up mainly of businessmen and economists urging radical changes in the government's debt-dependent policies. It has also called for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo over charges she cheated in last year's election and the formation of a 15-member transition government.

Tobias said Franco was "kind and fatherly" during their five- to 10-minute conversation. He said the Vatican envoy also invited him to the Nunciature, presumably to discuss the bishop's activities in the KME.

The KME also counts Bishops Julio Xavier Labayen and Deogracias Iniguez among its members. Labayen, a widely perceived left-leaning prelate, has retired. Iniguez was abroad when the Nuncio was issuing his reminder.

Franco appeared before the recent two-day meeting of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) and discussed the churchmen's prophetic role.

"He clarified in his speech that as bishops, we should not get involved in direct political actions because that is the direct arena of the lay people," Tobias said.

"We're here only for guidance," he said.

As practiced in the past, each of the bishops present was given a copy of Franco's speech, marked "confidential." One copy was printed for the CBCP's file.

The INQUIRER source said the speech included a message about the "clergy already getting involved in direct political action." He said bishops saw it as a reference to Tobias, Labayen and Iniguez.

"The nuncio didn't read it before the bishops, but it was in his speech," he said. "And instead of using the term 'bishops,' he used 'clergy.'"

The source said the Vatican ambassador apparently misunderstood Tobias' actions, owing to his active involvement in the KME.

Recalling Tobias' conversations with other clergymen, the source said "we got the impression that he's really not in favor of ousting the President."

Iñiguez yesterday said he also had this reading of Tobias. Iñiguez said he was personally not supporting the KME's clamor for an Arroyo resignation, only its campaign to correct the government's repressive economic policies.

"Demanding the President's resignation is not the only option," he told the INQUIRER. "I am personally giving her a chance to correct the direction of her governance."

In the final statement the CBCP released on July 10, the bishops said they were not politicians. "With Pope Benedict XVI, we do not believe in the 'intrusion into politics on the part of the hierarchy'," it said.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo acknowledges the greetings of the crowd after hearing Mass at the Nuestra Señora de Guia Parish Church in Ermita, Manila. PHOTO COURTESY OF OPS-NIB

Luneta rally elates Malacañang

PRESS Secretary Ignacio Bunye yesterday said the presence of tens of thousands of people at Saturday's rally in Luneta effectively slammed the doors on extraconstitutional means to force President Macapagal-Arroyo out of office.

In his weekly Internet column, Bunye said the Luneta mass action "dwarfed" the protest rally staged by the opposition at Ayala, Makati City, on July 13.

Bunye, in a transcript of a radio interview released by Malacañang, also said the Palace was happy that the Luneta prayer rally turned out to be peaceful.

He sidestepped reports that the pro-Arroyo rally was attended by largely paid crowds. He said he did not know about such reports because the rally—dubbed as intended for "peace, unity and the rule of law"—was organized by Metro Manila mayors.

"What we can say is that we're thankful that the rally was held in a peaceful way and it was able to show the sentiment of people and that was the rule of law should prevail," he said. *Christine O. Avendaño*

Cha-cha won't solve ...

From page A1

and wobbling republic," Lagdameo said.

Alignment of values

"Healing the system and renewing the political and economic culture means more than a change of Constitution, but a transformation and alignment of values of people in governance. Without this, change of Constitution will only be peripheral and cosmetic," he said.

In her efforts to regain public confidence in the face of the worst political crisis confronting her 4-year-old administration, Ms Arroyo has vowed to carry out plans to amend the Constitution and move the country from presidential to the parliamentary system.

Former President Fidel V. Ramos, whose 11th-hour declaration of support was regarded as one of the key factors that rescued Ms Arroyo from the brink a week ago, has indicated that the Charter change could provide a graceful way out for the embattled Chief Executive.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the initiative to amend the Constitution was simply a "smokescreen to cover Gloria's nakedness." He said he did not think it would prosper.

Even the Pope will fail

Administration lawmakers supporting the adoption of the parliamentary system said the country's problem was not the presidency but the system.

"You can put the Pope in Malacañang, and he will still fail because the system will make him fail," said one congressman.

The CBCP's July 10 statement was read or distributed in Churches across the land over the weekend.

Lagdameo said voting on the document, titled "Restoring Trust: A Plea for Moral Values in Philippine Politics," was unanimous after "all alternatives were presented, discussed, debated and discerned."

The archbishop of Jaro, who will begin his term next January following his election as president during the CBCP meeting, said he hoped to preside over the organization thinking as one and united at all times.

Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales also issued a letter yesterday to clarify the CBCP's July 10 statement.

Not an apologia

"The guidance it provided was never meant to be an apologia for the President as some would like to claim," he wrote. "It was, in fact, a decisive moral challenge to the highest leadership in the land."

Administration and opposition elements said the CBCP's stand to stay away from the resignation clamor possibly saved the Arroyo presidency following a mass defection by her key Cabinet secretaries and business and political allies, including ex-President Corazon Aquino.

Lagdameo said the bishops did not want to have a quick-fix to the crisis similar to the "people power" revolts that ousted Presidents Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and Joseph Estrada in 2001.

Times have changed

The CBCP statement in 1986 said: "In our considered judgment, the polls were unparalleled in the fraudulence of their conduct." In 2001, it said: "The many scandals that the President has reportedly gotten involved in since he assumed the presidency are morally reprehensible."

"Today, the circumstances are different. If the past two statements were perceived as political interventions which moved the people to the streets, in this third occasion, the statement of the CBCP is a pastoral statement and guide, leaving to the stakeholders and key players in the political arena the right to make their own political decision in response to their personal and communitarian analysis," Lagdameo said.

With a report from Christian V. Esguerra

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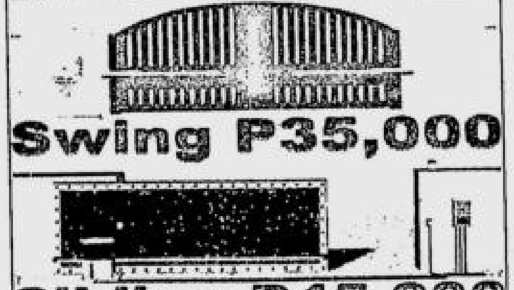

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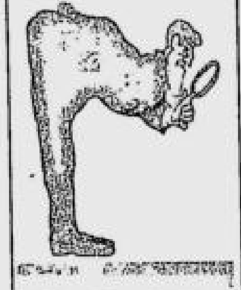

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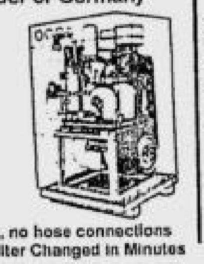

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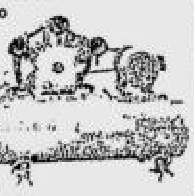

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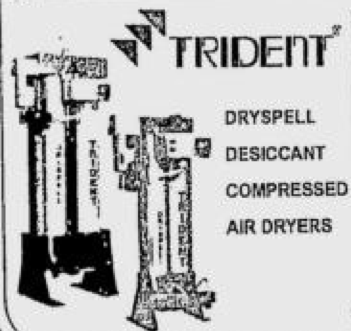

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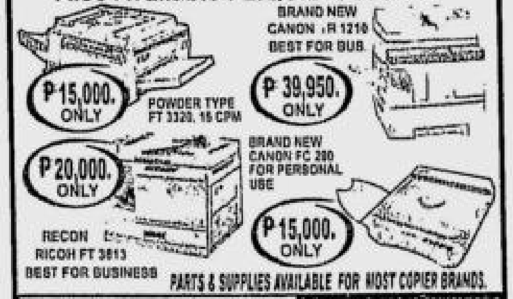

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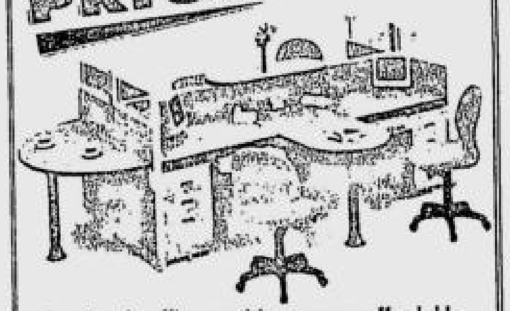

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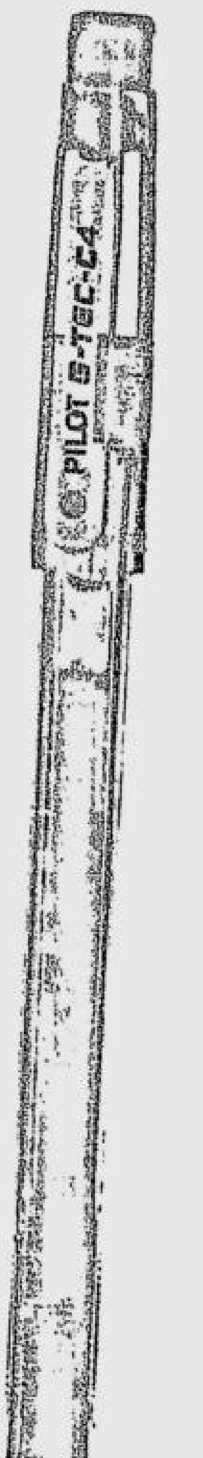

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Fuel truck bomb attack kills 70 in Iraq

AL MUSSAYIB, Iraq—The blitz of suicide bombings in Iraq showed no sign of abating Sunday after a bomber drove a tanker of liquified gas into a southern town killing at least 70 and wounding 95.

The Saturday evening bombing in the central square of Al-Musayyib town, 60 km south of the capital, devastated the main square, torched some 20 cars, destroyed about 40 shops and set nearby buildings on fire.

Separate suicide attacks continued Sunday morning in Baghdad where at least four Iraqis, three of them police commandos, were killed and 17 people wounded in three such bombings mostly on police convoys, an interior ministry official said.

Since Friday, some 100 people have been killed and nearly 300 wounded in some 20 suicide bombings around the country, according to an AFP count.

Saturday evening's bombing at Al-Musayyib, came at a time when people were out enjoying the relative evening coolness, and appeared to target a Shiite mosque which also houses the local offices of supporters of firebrand cleric Moqtada al-Sadr.

"I was 100 m away when I saw the fireball. It was enormous… People were burning in their cars. We had to get them out with hooks," said Khodr Abbas, a 24-year-old who works at the local Sadr office.

"I saw women in the burning houses crying for help and we couldn't do a thing," he said.

One of those injured, Ammar Al-Karaguili, 40, said he saw desparate parents throwing their children out of windows and from balconies to escape the inferno.

Police lieutenant Hassan Ali said the square was normally closed off to tanker trucks, but he thought this one was let through a road block when the driver said he wanted to turn his vehicle around.

"The driver then stopped his truck, got out, opened the tanker's gas valves and blew himself up," Ali said.

Police had earlier suggested a suicide bomber with explosives strapped to his body had walked up to the tanker before blowing himself up.

Four mortar bombs slammed into the town center seconds after the bombing, Ali added.

Local people thought the mortar fire might have come from the Jurf Al-Sakhar district, across the river, and they blamed militant Sunni Arabs for the coordinated strike.

Sunnis, who account for about a fifth of Iraq's population and who were dominant under ousted dictator Saddam Hussein, are believed to provide the backbone for the current insurgency.

At the local hospital, which was desperately short of medicine, especially for treating burn victims, a reporter saw dozens of corpses, including those of many children, burnt beyond recognition.

Every couple of hours, loudspeakers at the mosque, whose main door was also burnt, called out the names of the latest identified victims.

The suicide bombing, one of the most deadly since the US-led invasion of Iraq two years ago, was just one of about 20 that have rocked the country, especially Baghdad, since Friday.

There was no immediate reaction from the government to the latest attacks as Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari was on a scheduled official visit to neighboring Iran leading a large ministerial delegation.

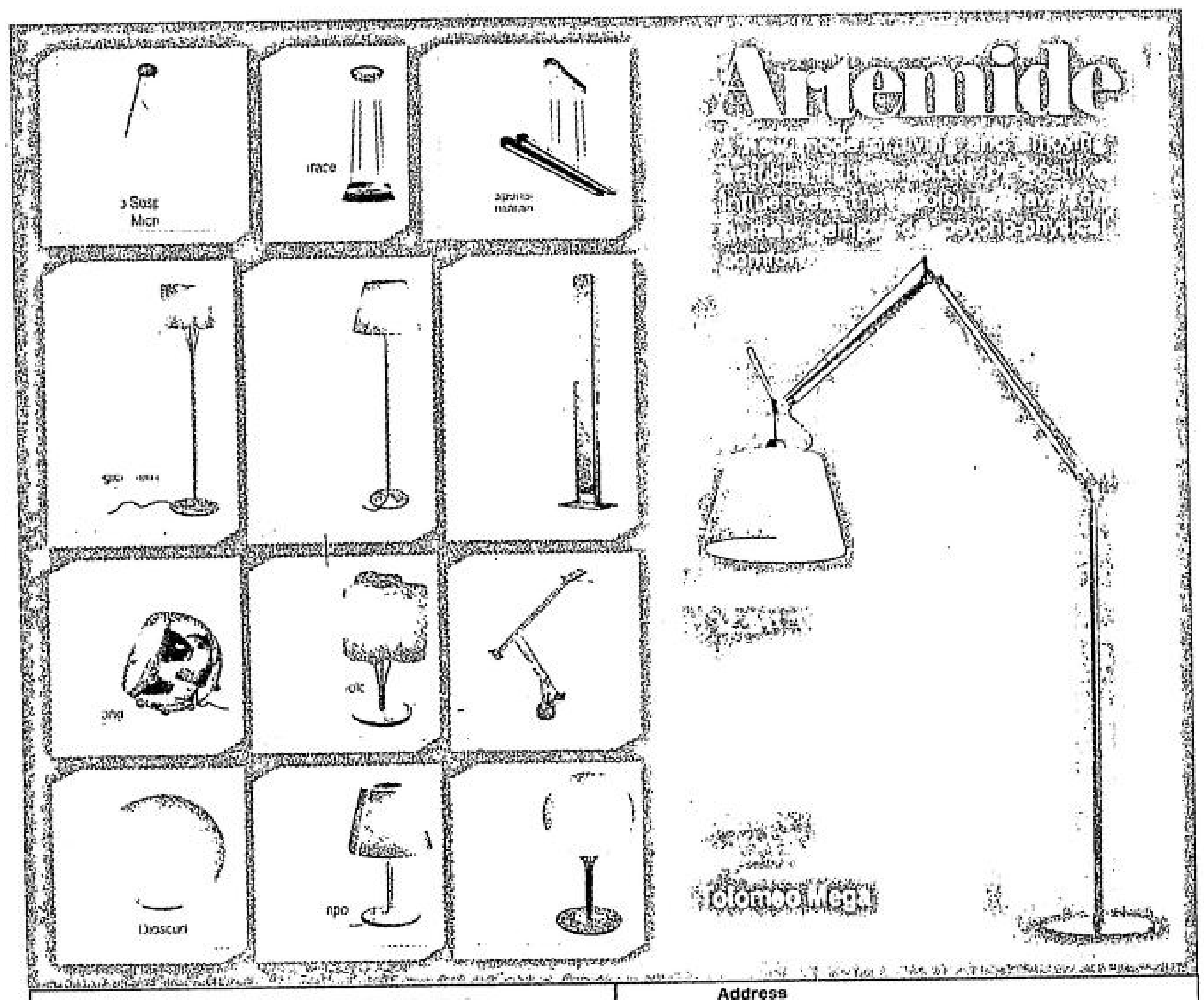
The trip aimed to turn the page on the neighbors' bloody war fought from 1980 to 1988 which left about a million dead. A peace treaty has still to be signed.

"Whether we like it or not, we are neighbors, and we should resolve our differences in a way beneficial to both parties," Jaafari said after being greeted at the airport by Iran's Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref.

In other violence on Saturday, a US soldier was killed and two more wounded by an improvised explosive device in the northern Kirkuk province of Iraq, the US military said Sunday.

This brought to 1,757 the number of US military personnel killed in Iraq since the March 2003 invasion, according to an AFP tally based on Pentagon figures. *AFP*

A US FEMALE soldier poses for a picture with an Iraqi female soldier who is covering her face with a scarf July 16 in Baghdad. Most Iraqi soldiers cover their faces afraid of being identified and targeted for killing by insurgents. AFP



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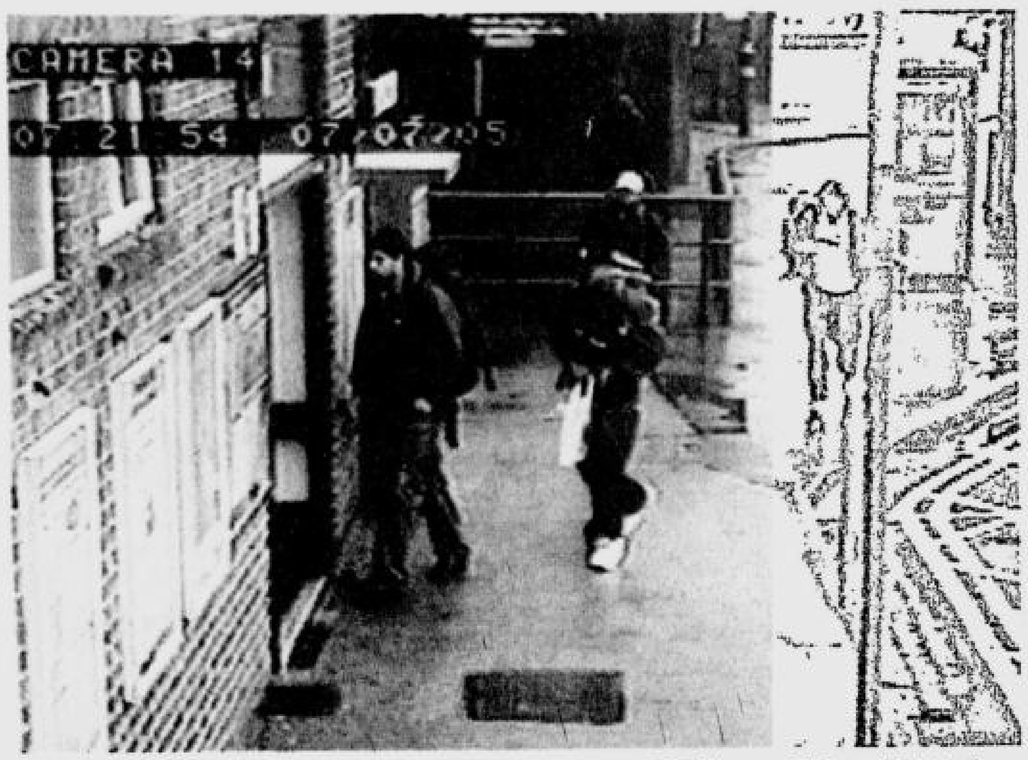

METROPOLITAN Police handout photo issued July 16 shows a CCTV image of (left to right) Hasib Hussain, Germaine Lindsay (dark cap), Mohammed Sidique Khan (light cap) and Shahzad Tanweer, the four suspected London suicide bombers, arriving at Luton train station at 07:21 a.m. on July 7. AFP

Photo shows bombers heading for London

LONDON—British police have released a chilling photograph of the four young men who bombed London last week which shows them trudging into a train station on the morning they detonated their explosives.

One newspaper said British officials had checked out one of the four last year but concluded he did not pose a threat.

As the investigation into the bombings continued in Pakistan and Egypt, Scotland Yard detectives published the picture in a bid to jog memories and garner more information from the public about the men's movements on the morning of the attacks.

The photograph, taken from CCTV footage, shows the men walking into a railway station in Luton, just north of London, to take a train to the capital.

The four are dressed casually and look relaxed, with their hands in their pockets. Each carries a backpack, thought to contain the bombs which tore through London's transport system during last Thursday's rush hour, killing 55 people.

The time code on the picture shows it was taken at 7.21 a.m., 89 minutes before three of the bombs went off in quick succession at three subway stations. The fourth blast tore apart a double-decker bus nearly an hour later.

Three of the bombers were young British Muslims of Pakistani origin, while the fourth was a Jamaican-born Briton. Two of them were teenagers, one was just 22 and the other was 30.

Pakistani security forces have arrested six men in connection with the bombings—the most recent in the eastern city of Lahore, where they detained two men on suspicion of having links with one of the bombers, Shahzad Tanweer.

Tanweer had visited Faisalabad and Lahore during two trips to Pakistan over the last two years. Pakistani intelligence sources say that in 2003 he met a man later arrested for bombing a church in the capital, Islamabad.

In Egypt, police have arrested a British-trained biochemist, Magdy Mahmoud Mustafa el-Nashar, and are questioning him about the attacks.

But Egyptian Interior Minister Habib el-Adli has said El-Nashar was not a member of al-Qaida and that Western and Arab media had drawn hasty conclusions about the arrested man.

The 33-year-old Egyptian was a researcher at Leeds University in England, and police are carrying out extensive searches at his rented house in the city, which was home to three of the bombers. *Reuters*

Stem cell bank to open in South Korea in October

SEOUL—South Korea's Hwang Woo-suk, who cloned the world's first human embryos for stem-cell therapy, will open a stem cell bank here in October, a news report said Sunday.

Hwang, a Seoul National University professor, told Yonhap news agency the proposed stem cell bank could serve as a global supply hub for patients.

"We plan to hold the opening ceremony for the World Stem Cell Bank on Oct. 19 in Seoul with stem cell researchers, including Gerald Schatten of the University of Pittsburgh, attending," Hwang told Yonhap.

Details still need to be finalized on the management of the stem cell bank, but Hwang wants it to be a state-run entity.

"As the stem cell bank should exist in the interest of the public, it is desirable to run it at a government level," he was quoted as saying.

Stem cells are nascent cells which can develop into replacement cells for damaged organs or body parts.

In February 2004, Hwang's research team announced that it had cloned human embryos, from which they harvested embryonic stem cells, for the first time ever. *AFP*

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ISSN 0116-2642
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Vol. 20 No. 222
Email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph website: http://www.inq7.net

OPINION

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The Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inc. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.
•100% soy ink•

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A perpetual campaign

EDITORIAL

MALACAÑANG seems to have settled on a new strategy for dealing with the political crisis that is rooted in allegations of election fraud: Run last year's campaign all over again.

This is a gross error, because it mistakes mere motion for actual movement. It confuses the requirements of public relations with the requisites of governance. Not least, it hardens public perception that political survival is indeed President Macapagal-Arroyo's only objective, as the Hyatt 10 had warned.

It is a serious mistake, but one that's easy to understand. It worked the first time around. Last year, the make-work initiative gave a considerable number of out-of-work adults and out-of-school youth simple short-term but high-visibility jobs; the T-shirts they wore were walking advertisements for the President. PhilHealth cards were also issued to at least 5 million Filipinos during last year's campaign, with the President's face on the health insurance cards and the administration footing the bill for the first year's premiums. Both programs were controversial; the alleged diversion of the road-users' tax to finance the temporary employment program, in particular, was attacked as unconstitutional.

But they did what they were supposed to do; together with a tsunami of advertising and a series of effective town-hall open forums moderated by her running mate, then-Sen. Noli De Castro, the campaign's centerpiece programs helped the President raise her survey numbers and create an aura of inevitability.

Now the President proposes to do it all over again.

On the PhilHealth cards: "The Philippine national government gave the first year's premium with the hope that the local government will give the second year's premiums for indigents. But because these programs have become valuable for the local governments that are not able to provide the premium for another year, the national government will help to renew that insurance," she said. First estimate of total cost: P4 billion.

On the emergency employment program: "I have a budget of P2 billion for that. One part of it will go to the pavement [rehabilitation] which has to be done more professionally by the companies but the other part [involves] things that can be done manually. We hope that after it worked so well last year, it will also work this year to help reduce the unemployment problem," she said.

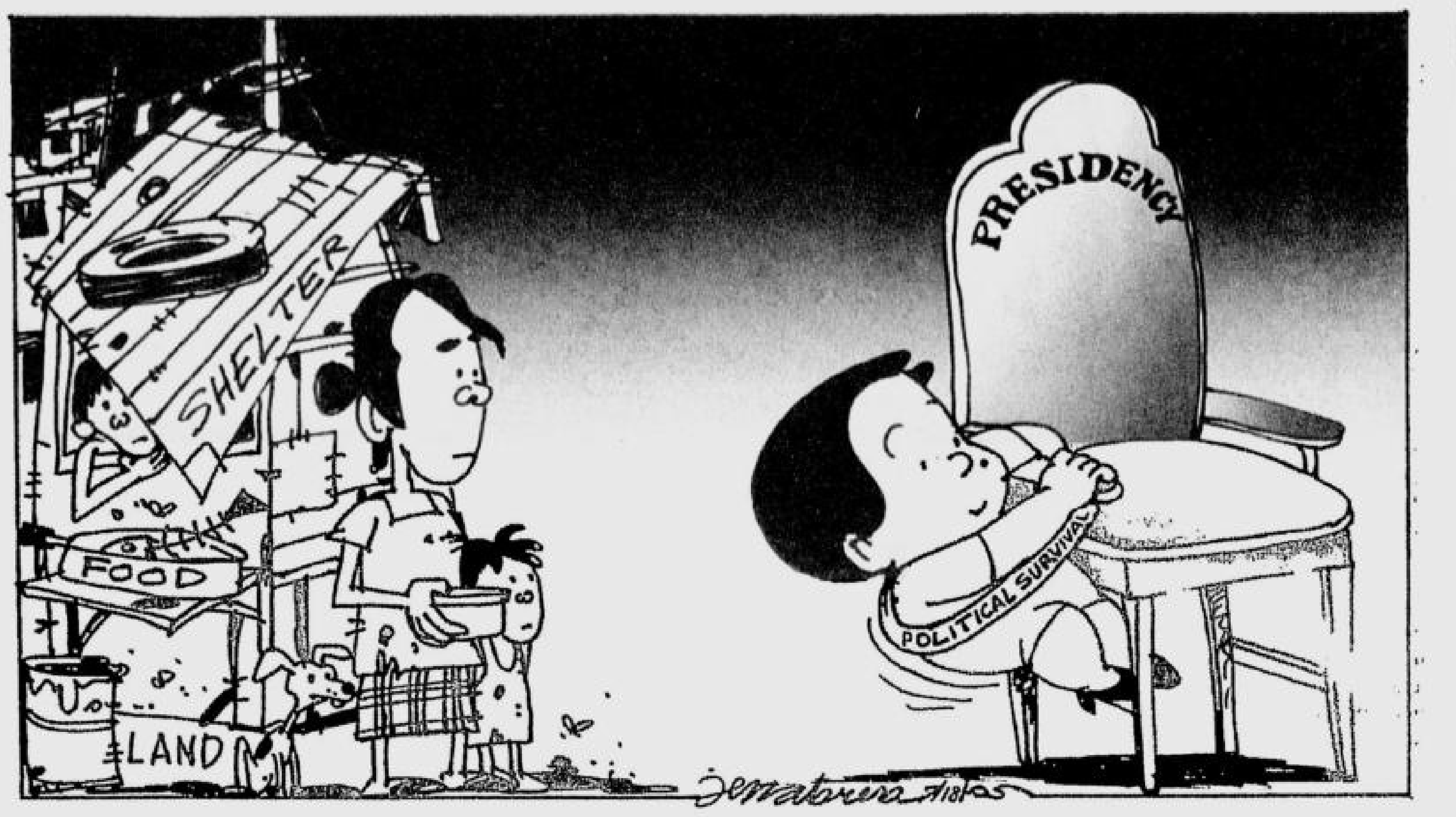
In making the announcement, Ms Arroyo also sought to soothe funding concerns. "With the increased tax collection from our phase one reforms [the increase in taxes on beer and cigarettes], we can now focus more money on things that will hopefully affect the poor more directly."

The two initiatives will certainly impact on the poor "more directly." But that doesn't necessarily mean that the administration should proceed with them, or even that the time is ripe for proceeding.

In the first place, it is premature to declare that "phase one" of the reform agenda has been completed. The expanded Value Added Tax law, to point only to the most prominent exception, continues to hang fire at the Supreme Court. To begin new spending programs before the new law is upheld is fiscally irresponsible.

Secondly, the proposed spending is itself suspect. The administration has the burden of explaining to the business community, the constituency that is tracking the reform agenda most closely, that these billion-peso programs were already on the drawing boards before the political crisis struck. (That will take some doing; the PhilHealth second-year premiums fell due last February and March.) To spend new money without the support of the business community is therefore politically risky.

Thirdly, the twin programs will reinforce public perception about last year's elections: That the President may have bribed, stolen, cheated or forced her way to the winning column. Palace advisers may have recommended that the President take a leaf from the political handbook of her Georgetown classmate Bill Clinton. But a perpetual campaign will only rub an already over-patient public the wrong way. The Arroyo administration needs a new controversy over warmed-over election gimmicks like a large hole in a very small head



Happy days here again for solons, local officials

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

WHY are there so many governors and mayors in Metro Manila? Somebody asked this question at a gathering last Saturday. Shouldn't they be in their hometowns and provinces attending to the needs of their constituents?

"They were summoned here to pledge support to President Macapagal-Arroyo," was the answer.

"Why are they so eager to go to Malacañang?" was the next question.

"Because of the *pabaon* that each of them gets."

Indeed, proceeds from the expanded VAT have not yet been collected but they are already being spent and distributed by Malacañang. And because of the impending impeachment complaint against GMA, happy days are here again for the congressmen and, soon, for the senators. Administration congressmen were seen trooping to the Palace to pledge support for GMA and when they went out, they were seen to be very happy.

Suddenly, the budget department has also been ordered to release pork barrel allocations to congressmen. Not so long ago, it was very hard to get fund releases for projects because the budget secretary had a hard time scraping up enough funds. Now that Emilia Boncodin is no longer the budget secretary, the department is very generous.

"If the stalemate over the presidency continues some more, the government will go bankrupt," somebody quipped.

Indeed, as some of the Hyatt 10 Cabinet members who resigned and asked GMA to do the same said, all the priorities of government are to ensure her political survival; governance takes the back seat.

* * *

Speaking of the Hyatt 10, Senate President Franklin Drilon told newsmen that there were originally 17 Cabinet members who had decided to resign but seven balked at asking the President to step down. So they did not join the first 10. But they have submitted or are about to submit resignations.

This account of Drilon confirmed the statement of former presidential adviser on the peace process Teresita Deles that more resignations of Cabinet members will follow.

Drilon also denied that he went to Hong Kong to talk to Vice President Noli de Castro. "I went there to talk to the President," he said.

What did they talk about?

"Briefly, what reforms she has to do to save her administration. I told her, 'Mrs. President, the perception of the public is that your husband is involved in governance, not only in appointments, [but] also in government contracts. This is not good. Do something about it because this erodes your ability to govern.'"

Drilon also said that the President is making too many compromises. "When you want to act in order to survive," he said, "you are liable to make too many compromises. Precisely, because of these compromises that you do in order to survive, that makes it difficult for you to govern. In fact, look at what is happening now. Former President Ramos is there. The projection is that he is the one running this government."

Drilon denied that he wanted to be vice president and executive secretary in a Noli de Castro presidency. "I have been there." He said he has been in the Cabinet for eight years and has been through all the positions. "I am not interested in going back to the Cabinet. *Mas maganda ang buhay namin dito sa Senado.*"

* * *

Tomorrow will be the moment of truth for the Equitable-PCI Bank when its stockholders meet to elect its new board of directors. The fight for control of the bank between the Go family, founders of Equitable and the SSS-GSIS group is very bitter and has reached the courts, the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Bangko Sentral, which finally disqualified Roberto R. Romulo, a Go ally, from being one of the independent directors of the bank.

Romulo blamed "the continuing effort of Banco de Oro and its owners (the family of Henry Sy) to gain control of EPCIB." BDO officials have admitted that they are keen on merging with EPCIB. And that's where the trouble starts.

The EPCIB has an anti-competitor provision in its by-laws that prevents the entry of BDO officials into its board. It is now a settled rule in the private sector that a private corporation can reject the nomination to its board of persons representing the interests of competitors. "BDO now wants to enter the board through the back door," with the help of the Social Security System and the Government Service Insurance System, said Romulo. The SSS and GSIS have a combined 40 percent of EPCIB shares (SSS 29 percent, GSIS 11 percent) which entitle them to occupy a sufficient number of board seats to control the bank. The Go family has only 25 percent, but it controls the bank's management.

However, the investment guidelines of our investment funds (SSS and GSIS) expressly prohibit them from taking over companies they invest in. Moreover, SSS and GSIS officials are just temporary trustees of their members, who are the true owners of the funds, Romulo said.

In December 2003, BDO tried to buy the SSS-GSIS shares but it was foiled. This triggered a Senate investigation because there was no bidding conducted for the sale of the shareholdings, contrary to the rules on equity divestment of government-owned assets.

Worse, the transaction would have meant a loss of P8.067 billion to SSS members. The SSS and GSIS acquired the EPCIB shares at P94 per share during the incumbency of President Estrada. The SSS agreed to sell its shares to BDO at only P43.5 per share during the incumbency of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The possibility of this deal being consummated will depend on the outcome of the EPCIB stockholders' meeting tomorrow.

Roads

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

WATCHING GMA last week tell the world with a straight face that it wasn't a matter of popularity, she had the vision, her enemies could only lead the country down the road to nowhere, I saw Marcos. That is one of the many things they have in common. Marcos could lie with conviction. It wasn't just that he was a good liar, it was that he actually believed his lie. He had internalized it to a point that it took on the aspect of truth etched in tablet—or in his mind. GMA is like that, too.

While saying it wasn't a popularity contest, GMA, of course, was preparing for a rally that would make her look popular. I would learn later that all the owners of the establishments in Baywalk were required to attend the rally, an order that probably came from Lito Atienza. All of which reminded me of Marcos' attempts at "*hakot* power" during the "snap elections" of 1986.

"This fight isn't about me," GMA told an audience of Fil-Ams, "it's about working within the rule of law and the virtue of democracy that we share with many countries, especially with the United States."

I don't know why the US Embassy didn't list the Fil-Ams who graced the event under the category of undesirable aliens. To be told by GMA that she shared a passion for democracy with Americans and not protest it is to not be an American. Can you imagine how Americans would react to knowing that their president talked to one of their election officials during the counting of votes? Can you imagine how Americans would react to their president admitting so but telling them to put it behind them and move on? Can you imagine how Americans would react to being told to not protest it violently out of respect for the law?

You'd have a revolution in America. Yet here all we saw were those Fil-Ams grinning from ear to ear and making the thumbs-up sign. Thumbs up to what?

What took the cake, of course, was GMA saying only she could lead the country to salvation, her enemies could lead it only on the road to nowhere. My cell phone was deluged by text messages that are not fit to print. I myself have always wanted to propose that TV carry a warning that says, "GMA causes hypertension, emphysema and cancer." I've had to tell friends to take life, including GMA—though they would protest the association—with a little more humor or end up drawing heavily on their health insurance. I'm not being entirely facetious when I say that GMA has not only caused more corruption, poverty and natural disasters, she has also caused more patients in hospitals.

At the very least, of course, better a road that leads nowhere rather than one that leads to perdition. The candidates the Comelec routinely weed out as "nuisance candidates" clearly have better programs than GMA for the simple reason that they do not include her. Their idea of love, peace and music may at least be argued to be possible, GMA's idea of democracy, decency and prosperity may not.

But that is nothing. Because the real question is not who has the better program, it is who has the right to offer any program. A thief may not scoff at the owner of a cell phone he has stolen and say he has a right to keep it because he has a better use for it while all the owner does is make *tsismis* with it. GMA may not scoff at the voters whose votes she has stolen and say she has a better use for the presidency, all the voters do is waste their votes on people like FPJ.

But we may not go without comment on the road GMA proffers. A year ago, shortly before the elections, I wrote a couple of columns, the first titled "Scary" and the other "More than ever, scary," both about GMA. In the first one, I said I had not seen such a scale of ambition and ruthlessness in anyone since Marcos. Not from Cory, not from Ramos, not from Erap.

Marcos won a second term by unleashing guns, goons and gold to an unprecedented level. GMA looked headed to a second term because she was unleashing gold, goons and guns to an unprecedented level. Marcos dreamt of ruling forever. GMA dreams of ruling forever.

A GMA supporter wrote angrily to say surely I knew in my heart that wasn't true, GMA was no Marcos. I replied in the second column that, on the contrary, I not only knew it to be true, I felt it to the very marrow of my bones. Was it possible, I asked, that people could not actually see how this person's compulsive drive to power resembled Marcos'? I look at our situation today and I am astounded at how we are reliving the nightmare all over again.

But there is one very fundamental difference between Marcos and GMA. That was that Marcos at least won the right to be president twice. He won the elections against Diosdado Macapagal in 1965 and against Sergio Osmeña in 1969. The irony in the latter was that he cheated when he never needed to. That isn't the case at all with GMA.

I look at our situation today and I am astounded even more by the fact that the one person who has wrought the worst crisis in this country since Marcos is one who never won the right to lead it. One who became President in 2001 without earning the moral right to, hiding under the bed while the battle was raging, and later thanking not Cory or Cardinal Sin, who took her by the hand when it was safe, but a Pope who was too dead to contradict her. And one who became President in 2004 without having the legal right to, conniving with Hello Garci to defraud the voters but refusing to step down upon being found out, clinging to her position with a tenacity beyond the powers of Epoxy or Mighty Bond to effect. Talk of tragedy repeating itself as farce.

But the consequence is bound to be the same: martial law, official or de facto. That is the road GMA offers.

Walking down that road has the same sensation as being flushed down the drain.

Reading the CBCP statement

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo says that she will read every line of the statement of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines. Many others will also read it and try to understand what the bishops said and did not say. One leading businessman, for instance, reads the statement as counsel to Cory Aquino and to the Makati Business Club to reconsider their call for resignation. I myself do not see that counsel in the statement. Neither does Ms Aquino nor many of the members of the MBC. For my part, what do I see?

Definitely, the bishops say that they do not demand the resignation of President Arroyo. As they put it, "Therefore, in a spirit of humility and truth, we declare our prayerfully discerned collective decision that we do not demand her resignation."

One has to read this statement from the standpoint of where the bishops are coming, and in the context of the controversy they are dealing with. The controversy deals with secular matters on which men and women of good will are divided. As bishops say again in their own words: "We can only answer these questions from who we are. We are not politicians who are to provide a political blueprint to solve political problems. Rather, we are bishops called by the Lord to shepherd the people in the light of faith."

What I hear them saying is that this is not a matter of black and white where they can counsel the laity to take a particular political option. They did it in 1986 when things were clearer. Now the general moral principles are clear enough; but their application depends very much on the verification of facts, an undertaking for which the bishops are not particularly equipped. The verification of these facts is the function of the laity. What the bishops have done is to lay down the moral guidelines which the laity can use for making specific political judgment. If, in the present context of the controversy, the bishops should demand that an elected President resign, they would be dangerously treading the line that separates Church and State.

It is significant, therefore, that having refused to demand resignation, they immediately add: "Yet neither do we encourage her simply to dismiss such a call from others. For we recognize that non-violent appeals for her resignation, the demand for a Truth Commission and the filing of an impeachment case are not against the Gospel." Again, what I am hearing them say is that they are not demanding from the laity and others who are not bishops to refrain from clamoring for resignation or impeachment or Truth Commission. The bishops recognize the people's right to seek redress for grievances; or, as they put it, to demand accountability.

But have the bishops ruled out extra-constitutional measures comparable to People Power of 1986? Again let us listen to their words: "In the present crisis, some calls are being made of measures that are counter-constitutional. The Constitution enshrines cherished values such as human dignity and the common good, freedom, the rule of law and due process." I read "counter-constitutional" as meaning "unconstitutional." It is not the same as "extra-constitutional." An extra-constitutional measure is one that is not provided for in the Constitution but is not prohibited by it either. Such was People Power in 1986.

But the bishops also say: "We reject calls for juntas or revolutionary councils. Our political leaders have to be the first to observe and faithfully implement the Constitution. Resolving the crisis has to be within the framework of the Constitution and the laws of the land so as to avoid social chaos, the further weakening of political systems, and greater harm in the future."

Are we to read this as meaning that they also reject what happened successfully through the 1986 People Power which was extra-constitutional? I would not put that in their mouth. After all, this sentence is in the paragraph which begins with a criticism of measures that are "counter-constitutional," meaning unconstitutional. If the 1986 People Power would be duplicated, it would be extra-constitutional but not unconstitutional. The statement does not condemn extra-constitutional processes. In fact, the compound word "extra-constitutional" does not appear in the statement at all.

Moreover, I cannot see the bishops as issuing a blanket condemnation of extra-constitutional measures since such measures can be an expression of the will of the sovereign people. What I see, in fact, as glaringly clear is that the bishops see the critical lack of moral moorings in the way public affairs are run and that they are desirous that this be righted. But they refrain from specifying the means for achieving a better and more moral society. They leave the fashioning of political solutions to temporal powers and to civil society. The only restrictions they would advocate are that the measures should not be "contra-constitutional" and that "cherished values such as human dignity and the common good, freedom, the rule of law and due process" be honored. There are various ways of acting which honor these restrictions.

Finally, let me just say that, although I have been cited as approving of extra-constitutional measures, in my judgment, the time and circumstances now are far from being ripe for extra-constitutional measures. I believe that such judgment also fits into the statement of the bishops. The statement must be read against the background of how the bishops stood in 1986.

A circus of nitwits

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Antonio J. Montalvan II

WHY does the political discourse so far exonerate the opposition leaders who made their own "Hello, Garci" calls? Juan Ponce Enrile has admitted calling Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano but has judged himself above impropriety. Loren Legarda is in her usual denial mode. Jinggoy Estrada is, oh well, true to form. Jamby Madrigal has been quiet lately; a guilty conscience, perhaps? And even the recent turncoat Rodolfo Biazon has merely turned in a hypocritical "no comment," a standard he has not used on Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. What absolute hypocrisy. These politicians must all be brought before the bar of justice. A war against cheaters must be a war against all cheaters.

And that is the basic flaw of the CBCP's call for a Truth Commission. Whose truth will be ferreted out? So far it cites only the President's but is silent on the equally guilty administration and opposition leaders who were, after all, also palsy-walsy with Garci for their own possible *"dagdag-bawas"* ends. Sure, they can say they didn't cheat but that is what the President is saying, too.

On the other hand, the fear of a Noli de Castro presidency is not so much because of his perceived underqualification. It is more because of its long-term prospects. It is easy to envisage a President De Castro unseated by calls for his resignation. And it will be one unseating after another, ad infinitum, debasing the institution of the presidency into a revolving array of musical chairs dependent on the political caprices of a rowdy few. Oh, my myopia! Cory Aquino obviously misses out on the portent.

Conversely, may God save this country and its citizenry, already reeling from political fatigue, from the long process of impeachment. Lawmakers generally don't care about the harmful effects of their grandstanding on our people who are the hapless victims of their verbal tussles which are justified euphemistically as "in aid of legislation."

What about Fortunato Abat's *bangus* junta? Does it even deserve any comment at all? As to the FVR solution—for Congress to convene itself into a Constituent Assembly—please, not an already tainted body to tamper with our lives. No way!

And Franklin Drilon in the event of a double vacancy following a Gloria-Noli resignation? Wow, for a chameleon calling for GMA to resign shortly after inviting her to set up a Malacañang in Iloilo, that certainly is a long way covered in eight days. The lust for sheer power is as clear as crystal.

The same thing can be said of the vacillating Panfilo Lacson, who is now also salivating for the vice presidency.

Finally, what about a status quo with Gloria? No, not without an all-out war against *jueteng*. Is she truly beholden to the Pinedas of her hometown Lubao? No, not with the frustrating absence of radical reforms in the executive department. No wonder allies are driven to burn their bridges with her. I am beginning to fear that Gloria does not see the weight of the CBCP statement. Self-preservation is no way to face the truth.

Worse is the intellectual dishonesty of many of these circus players. So Butch Abad was in Hong Kong after all, but he couldn't explain beyond saying that he was just there to ask the Vice President a few questions. What in heaven's name is that? And why was the group of Cesar Purisima, using fictitious names in the hotel registry, holed up in the Hyatt Regency beginning on the night of July 7? For them to plot their actions under suspicious circumstances of their own making only fuels more talks of Drilon's sinister "orchestration."

Susan Roces as an alternative? But her fire and brimstone left a bad taste in the mouth. Despite her thespian skills, she spoke like a *palengkera* (with all due respect to market vendors). Accusing the President of stealing the presidency twice, and then making that accusation with a face contorted in a griping widow's anger? Why, Susan, Marcos not only stole but nipped thousands of lives forever, and yet no protestation was ever heard from you and your late husband. As with the habitual *balimbing* Tito Guingona, the dynast Jejomar Binay (whose conjugal hold over Makati should have been ended long ago), Susan, in her speech, was full of intellectual dishonesty. There's a name for it—pseudo-nationalism. By the way, there's a text message proposing that Binay be investigated too for electoral cheating and for his ownership of a "Tagaytay mansion and 25 expensive cars."

The circus has begun and so what else is new? Compounding the comedy is Cory's double moral standard which she wants to apply only to Gloria. How about if she starts with Kris first? I echo Victor Agustin: did Gloria drive a Cabinet secretary to suicide? Remember Jimmy Ongpin? And the Mendiola Massacre. There's more in the comedy—nationalists arm-in-arm with Imee and JV Ejercito. No, nationalism demands consistency of struggle, not the cheap expediency of tactical alliances. Wheeling-dealing is not for true nationalists. Hello!

"The Philippines is a country that will burn the house down just to kill a rat," so goes a text message. Yes, and missing out on the other equally pestilent rats in the same house which, needless to say, need to be eliminated, too. A fight for the truth should be fought with the truth. Substituting a nitwit with another is no solution. Is it any wonder then why the critical mass is not out on the streets?

Don't worry about us Gloria, Mike, Mikey, Iggy, Noli, Frank, Joe de V, Cory, Eddie, Erap, Susan, Ping, Pong, Nene, Manny, Rez, Niño, Tito, JV, Jinggoy, Imee, Kit, Johnny, Jamby, Loren, Noynoy, Kris, Cesar, Dinky, Ging, Butch, Chiz, Jejomar, Brother Eddie, Garci, et al. We will be fine without you!

* * *

Comments to monta@cu-cdo.edu.ph

The secession card

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

WE are familiar with politicians who, when asked to vote, vote either in the affirmative or in the negative. There are those, however, who abstain from voting. Abstention, in some cases, can send a powerful message. In the current political crisis, abstentions are being proclaimed as tantamount to votes of confidence for the President. But they are not.

The silence—some say indifference—of people outside Metro Manila, presumes that people in Davao, Cebu, Baguio and Legazpi have different political and social values from those in Metro Manila, many of whom, observers point out, come from those areas. There are Cebuanos in Manila: does this mean being in Manila makes them different in mentality from their cousins back home?

Central Visayas is very interesting. Recall that it was generally anti-Marcos (the Osmeñas were feuding with Marcos; even the present chief justice was, at one time, an opposition assemblyman) during martial law; and that it was always anti-Estrada. So it can be said, Cebu and Manila saw eye-to-eye in 1986 and 2001, but have been on a collision course since 1998, when Estrada won Manila but lost Cebu. Cebuanos are famously loyal to those they elect. But they, and all Visayans, are equally famous for having helped establish—and fight for—the Republic.

It might be better, though, to think that outside Manila, silence is less a vote for the President, and more a vote in favor of a future in which political questions will only be on local affairs. Meaning, the abstentions are also as much against the political opposition; they are for a future in which these problems won't arise anymore. Add to this the hope that by showing they can effectively undercut the political goings-on in Manila, they could force national politicians to actively court the provinces, and you have yet another example of how true the saying is: all politics is local.

Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is the first President since 1969 to fanatically concentrate on the provinces as a basis for establishing, and maintaining, support. But she faces three challenges. First, the President must keep her bailiwicks; and, God forbid, if she appears to be losing their support there, other areas of support may quickly crumble; second, the President has support from officials whose constituencies don't like the President; therefore, the electorate could, and might, influence how long the support for GMA would remain; third, there are officials supporting the President not because they like her or are loyal to her, but in expectation of achieving something else, such as federalism or greater autonomy. These three points apply almost exactly to (1) Pampanga, Ilocos Sur and the Visayas; (2) The rest of Luzon, Bicol, Palawan; and (3) Mindanao.

The President can claim, based on the official results, that the Cordillera Administrative Region, Western Visayas, Central Visayas, Caraga, Ilocos Sur (thanks to Chavit Singson) and Pampanga (presumably) as hers. As for the other regions and provinces, they can be considered neutral. The opposition (Poe-Estrada camp) can claim the Proberz survey which identified the opposition bailiwicks: the Cagayan Valley, Central Luzon, Calabarzon, Mimaropa, Eastern Visayas, Zamboanga Peninsula, Davao Region, Metro Manila and the ARMM. However, does the loyalty of the voters to Fernando Poe Jr. translate into support for the leaders who have survived him? I think not. So, while not friendly toward the President, these regions may not be actively hostile (Duterte of Davao says Davao is for the President; I suggest, Davao is for Davao, period).

Also, the President has behind her the Lakas-CMD network and the governors and mayors whose support she has cultivated since day one of her presidency. The opposition, which is fragmented, has no national or regional network of support, except the Left. That is why only the Left has dared to mount protests in the President's perceived bailiwicks (its attack on the President's office in Cebu, for example).

The opposition has no leader in the provinces, and has not made an effort to cultivate support in those places. This, to my mind, is what the provincial leaders are really saying: the President has put something on the table, federalism; the others haven't put forward anything substantial. Besides, the governors can legitimately ask, who do we, as provincial leaders, talk to? Until the opposition or a leader brings them into the tent, they remain in the President's. A weak presidency has been the dream of local politicians since they put together the Malolos Constitution in 1898.

Assuming, as a CNN nationwide (in contrast to the string of Metro Manila surveys that don't tell us anything we don't already know) survey suggests, that the President is almost universally unpopular (bear in mind that unpopularity is different from active hostility), are the politicians' putting forward secession or making a strong case for consultation in synch or out of synch with their constituents' wishes?

I'd argue they are in synch in that there seems to be no opposition to their playing the secession card. Everyone knows the secession card is a bluff, and it can only be played a few times without things spinning out of control. (There is a fine line between saying we may secede and we shall secede.) The provincial leaders are using secession to demand attention. Their support for the President, then, is conditional, and the challenge for the President will be to nurture that support. The concept of a united Philippines may be rhetorically under attack, but the attacks are couched such that the threat of disunion is used as a means to achieve a more perfect union. This is significant.

* * *

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph/blog

Eating our leaders

COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

HONOLULU—My e-mail and voice mail are fast filling up with queries about what's happening in the Philippines. I am not the Philippine consul general or something, but I find it part of my job on a day-to-day basis to try to respond in a non-alarming way to questions on what's going on in the Philippines every time some distressing news appears in the papers. Rumors about the next "people power" initiative are again in the air, especially in the wake of the President's public apology. It's almost becoming routine. Pretty soon, we will gain the dubious distinction in the Guinness Book of World Records as the country most prone to, as the saying goes, "eating its leaders." Since the glorious 1986 People Power Revolution at Edsa, we have either eaten one more leader or made it difficult for others while in office.

And now, we are on the verge of chasing the current leader out, which might happen sooner than later if we believe some of the doomsayers. Political cannibalism may be a new concept that we can contribute to the vocabulary of contemporary political science. If we keep chasing our leaders out, the logical question becomes, why have them in the first place?

Even granted that we chase this one out, the country will acquire another loser in all probability because every president will be confronted by a bewildering array of insoluble problems that no single individual can possibly handle. The problem is not only long-standing but systemic. Every leader will be short-lived, wearing a veritable crown of thorns.

"If GMA goes," one caller speculated, "it wouldn't be so bad if her successor constitutionally (referring, of course, to Vice President Noli de Castro), is competent." The implication, of course, is that the country might be worse off if President Macapagal-Arroyo is ousted only to be replaced by someone who is perceived as incompetent. And this, of course, would lead to other problems. It's one of those conundrums.

Interesting insights on choosing leaders in democratic societies are offered by a recent work entitled "Everyday Democracy: Why We Get the Politicians We Deserve," by Tom Bentley. It appears in Demos, known as the leading "democratic think-tank." Bentley's thesis is that, democracy is facing a "crisis of legitimacy," which political parties the world over are failing to address. Legitimacy is, of course, one of the key canons of political science. It generally means authority which is widely accepted as rightful and valid. The implication is that, government to be effective must first of all be legitimate. At the very least, a government that considers itself legitimate must have the tacit loyalty of a predominant chunk of its citizens, regardless of its performance in the short run.

Back to Bentley, who is referring to Great Britain in this essay, he says that politicians' ability to tackle major issues is undermined by their "lack of legitimacy," in which more than half the public, for instance, describe both the prime minister and the leader of the opposition as "untrustworthy." That's probably too mild a term to characterize people's sentiments. Change that to "corrupt" or something more to the point in the context of other countries. In any case, Bentley also argues that "we have made genuine political leadership, which tackles big issues faced by society, almost impossible."

What he means by this is that, voters have unrealistic expectations of their leaders and the latters' ability to deliver wide-ranging change. "People inevitably feel disappointed in our politicians, and many react by opting out of the democratic process altogether—which reduces the legitimacy of democracy for us all."

"We just don't need new leaders," exhorts Bentley, "we need a new form of leadership which acknowledges its own limitations, while challenging the public to tackle the big issues, such as climate change, or the pensions crisis, by changing their own attitudes and behavior." Bentley argues that current proposals for reform or "revival of the political culture" distract people from the real issues, which have to do with people's lives in their families and work places.

Among the proposals for reforms is to revive the notion of the "strong leader." In fact, Bentley continues, the main parties are obsessed by a "strong leader myth." And he is certain that this will do nothing to restore their own legitimacy.

By way of conclusion, Bentley suggests a number of counterproposals, some of which may apply to other parts of the world where democracy has been "delegitimized." These are: (1) Creating rights of initiative and petition, enabling community and campaigning organizations to play a greater role to develop policy agenda and share in decision-making; (2) introducing new forms of neighborhood governance; and (3) promoting models of democratic organization in the business, public and charity sectors.

The Philippines, it has been said over and over, has left its fundamental problems of poverty, corruption, inequality, injustice and so on festering and unsolved. "Who can fix the Philippines?" is a favorite question of the pundits. The quick answer, of course, is the Filipinos themselves.

Former President Ramos exhorts us to await more resolute measures from President Arroyo herself. And as before, Ramos has cautioned against a coup. Indeed, while some have suggested that the current President "solidify her support from the military," this will not be her best option. She is trying to come up with some confidence-building measures designed to shore up her presidency, and if the economy were not doing so badly, these might help but probably not much.

Meanwhile, it's a waiting game. She rode out the political firestorm in 2003 brought on by the misbegotten coup attempt in Makati. This one seems much, much tougher. While I always want to end on an optimistic note, I say, this is worrisome, to say the least.

Belinda A. Aquino is professor of Political Science and Asian Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa where she is also director of the Center for Philippine Studies.

THEY SAID

Distracted

"They are so distracted, glued on TV and computers, and don't read enough literature to make them develop values and idealism. There are not enough programs on TV that would cultivate (such values). We're too much into the entertainment world, and not in the educational and moral world."

—Dr. Fernando Hofileña on today's youth

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LETTERS

Not enough to atone for nation's sorry state

IN THE INQUIRER editorial titled "Unsatisfactory" (PDI, 6/30/05), it was pointed out that "In making a public apology, the President and her advisers apparently hoped that the Filipino people would give more weight to her demonstration of humility and repentance than the gravity of her transgressions...all she was prepared to admit was the impropriety of talking to an election official, but not the possibly criminal nature of what they were talking about."

Indeed, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's belated apology and incomplete admission of her misdeeds are insufficient to gain the people's trust. And she has gone overboard to expect forgiveness without doing penance. We believe that apology without justice is morally unacceptable.

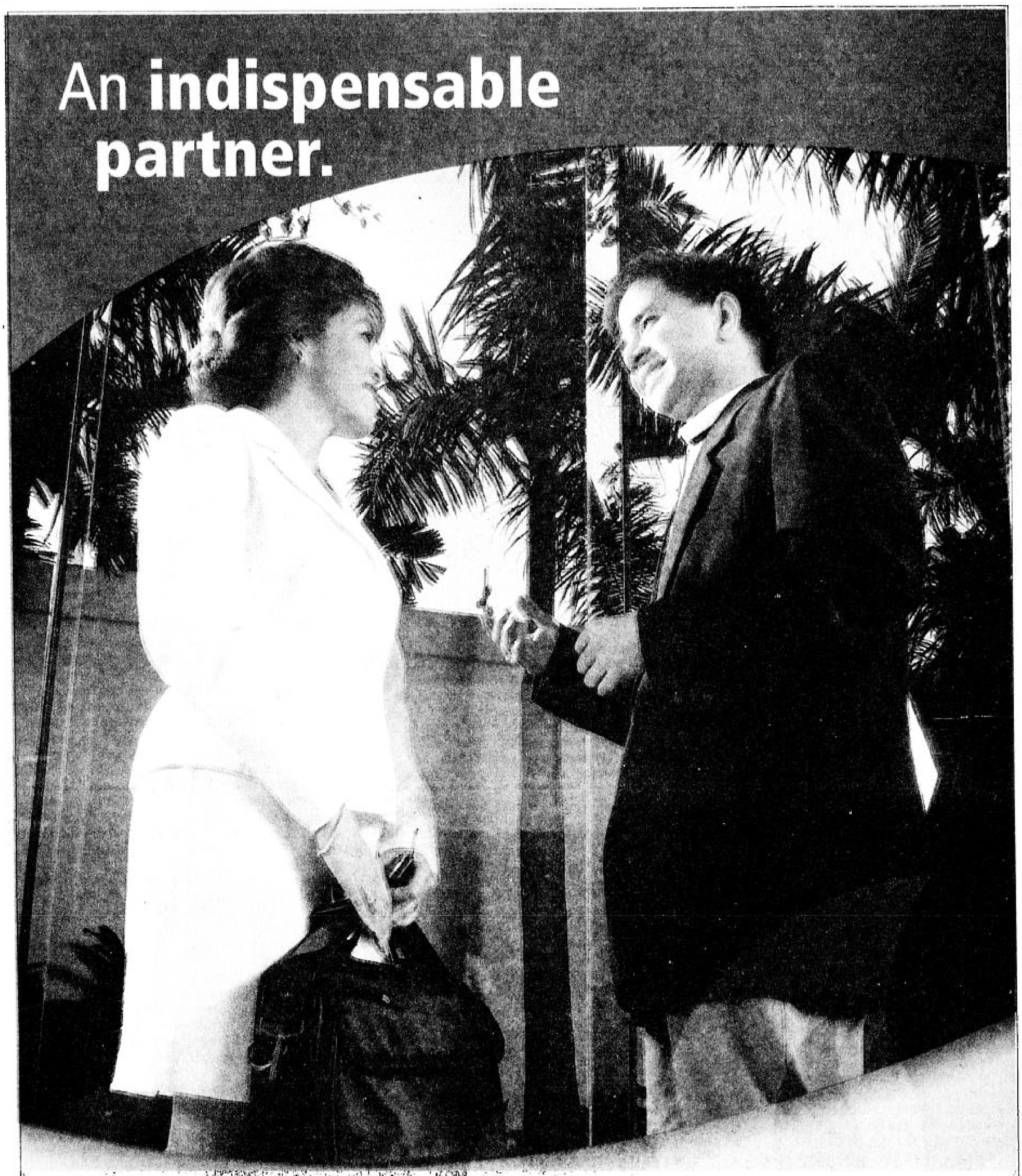
Without the people's genuine mandate and without the moral ascendancy to govern, GMA must resign now. This is the best penance she can do for the sake of truth and justice.

Aside from the popular view that GMA is guilty of massive fraud, corruption and betrayal of public trust, GMA has failed in delivering on the promises she made in her inaugural address. In fact, Filipinos have become poorer under GMA and have no more patience to sacrifice more and hear recycled promises in the coming State of the Nation Address (Sona) on July 25. Oil prices and electricity and water rates continue to rise and fuel the people's outrage in the face of GMA's adherence to policies that favor the foreign and local business elite.

GMA continues to buy the loyalty of the armed forces by providing a bigger budget for military operations than for education, health care and housing for the people. This, after financing her reelection campaign with millions of taxpayers' money diverted to buy votes and "protect" her electoral victory. She declared a crackdown on corruption, but the First Family has been exposed as the major beneficiary of *jueteng* operations, road scams and every major business contract in the country.

Peace in our country will remain elusive precisely because of the worsening economic conditions under GMA. No, her apology is not enough to compensate for the terribly sorry state of the nation, which is the result of massive fraud, corruption, plunder and human rights violations by her regime.

—AMIE DURAL,
secretary general,
Promotion of Church
People's Response,
879 Edsa, Quezon City



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Review nutrition policies

JULY is annually celebrated as Nutrition Month. What is now the status of malnutrition in our country? Has it been substantially reduced?

In her book, "Nutrition in the Philippines," Dr. Cecil Florencio says that, in 2003, there were about 5 million who were underweight and 7 million who were underheight and anemic among the pre-school and school-age children. Florencio says that it may take 20 years before the country can achieve the Millennium Development Goal of cutting by 50 percent the number of people who are hungry.

What can be done to solve this man-made tragedy? One recommendation of Florencio is to strongly promote nutrition education among the people. Another is to strongly urge breast-feeding among women. Instead of distributing chemical-based vitamins, a dietary-based approach should be used to combat vitamin deficiency among the people. The role of profit-oriented private companies in food and nutrition programs should be limited. Moreover, the government's policies on trade, agriculture, taxes, labor and wages should be critically analyzed (and opposed or supported) to see their effect on the people's right to food and nutrition.

—RAFFY REY HIPOLITO,
policy advocacy officer,
FoodFirst Information &
Action Network-Philippines,
9-B Matulungin St.,
Barangay Central, Quezon City

Clash of opinions in the Inquirer

I DO not pretend to be a knowledgeable person. But as an individual who buys a copy of the INQUIRER every day, I want to bring to the attention of the newspaper's management my feelings about the daily itself and Amando Doronila.

The editorials are sometimes in conflict with Doronila's opinions. Considering that he is an editorial consultant of the INQUIRER, his opinions should therefore jibe with the editorials. Or is it possible that the editorials do not pass Doronila's review prior to printing, or vice versa?

On the other hand, are Doronila's columns reviewed by other editors prior to final printing? Such practice is done in the United States and in other countries. If this is done by the INQUIRER, the newspaper and its editorial staff will come out cohesive in their thinking.

If the clash of opinions cannot be avoided, perhaps, Doronila's column should come out in other papers, and it will enjoy more mileage in the long run.

I am "sorry" for having this "lapse," but this is an honest opinion from one who desires a more valuable newspaper in this world.

—RUPERTO GARCIA,
chair, Citizen's Watch for the
Enhancement of Good Governance,
Maco Poblacion, Compostela Valley

AMANDO Doronila's comments are independent of the INQUIRER editorial's position on issues. Columnists' opinions need not follow the editorial line. This allows diversity of points of view on the INQUIRER's opinion page, thus giving balance to the page, avoiding homogeneity and providing a marketplace of ideas which is the function of a newspaper. The INQUIRER's editorial is not reviewed by Doronila. His column passes through the editor for editing only.—**Ed.**

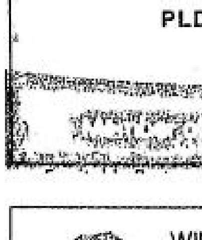
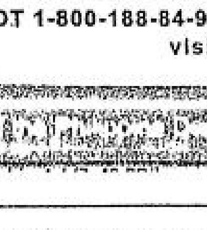
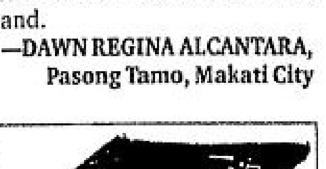
Unsure

WITH THE RESIGNATION of most of President Macapagal-Arroyo's credible and capable Cabinet members, the thought of joining the calls for her to resign entered my mind. But I'm worried about what possibly can happen under a Noli de Castro presidency, knowing as I do that, compared with GMA's over 10 years of government experience backed by an economics degree, he lacks experience (only four years of government exposure) and knowledge in governance and fiscal management.

Noli's strength as a public servant lies primarily in his sincerity to serve the people and his being a reluctant politician.

I feel that the country's political, economic and social situation is breaking apart with every passing day. As a concerned Filipino, I also need to decide on what stand I should take. I cannot remain neutral and I believe all of us should make a stand.

—DAWN REGINA ALCANTARA,
Pasong Tamo, Makati City

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4 DENR execs face charges

ROXAS CITY—Four officers of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in two Romblon towns face administrative charges for their alleged involvement in the illegal use of hardwood species for furniture seized in May by the local Coast Guard.

Arvi L. Fernado, DENR hearing officer of Negros Occidental, recommended the filing of administrative charges against Charlito Valdez, Odiongan community environment and natural resources officer (Cenro); Victor Cantaoi, Cenro substation officer in charge of Magdiwang Sibuyan, and Odiongan Cenro inspecting officers Orlando Cantaoi and Ludwin Ruaco.

In his June 23 resolution, Fernado said the narra and acacia furniture items, which were seized on May 19 at the Culasi port here, were of dubious origin and covered by a cutting permit allegedly issued by the Odiongan and Sibuyan environment officials.

The items consisted of 16 dining tables and "Cleopatra sets" worth about P130,000. *Felipe V. Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau*

3 top Napocor execs dismissed

By Melvin Gascon
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—The Ombudsman has ordered the dismissal of three officials of the National Power Corp. for dishonesty and misconduct they committed in 1999.

In three separate decisions, Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo dismissed Marcelo Ganaden from the service for committing three offenses of dishonesty when he was Napocor manager for Cagayan Valley.

Also ordered dismissed for two counts of dishonesty were Jose Bautista, former division manager for Cagayan, and Ernesto Narciso Jr., principal engineer, then based at the Napocor regional office in Santiago City.

The dismissed officials are now holding various positions in the National Transmission Corp. (Transco). Ganaden is district manager for Benguet and Mt. Province, Bautista is division manager at the Cabanatuan City substation, and Narciso is principal engineer at the Transco regional office in Baguio City.

The Ombudsman also ordered the suspension for one year of Oscar Mina, engineering specialist, who "merely acted as a go-between and negotiator" for Ganaden.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach Ganaden and his co-respondents for comment. A member of his staff said Ganaden had changed his mobile phone number.

The cases stemmed from three administrative cases filed in 2001 by six Napocor employees and a private contractor against the three officials for their involvement in anomalous contracts.

The Ombudsman said the three dismissed officials conspired to manipulate Napocor projects by using dummies to act as supposed private contractors, while ordering their employees to do the work.

After the projects were completed, the Napocor officials, using their dummies, collected the contract payment for themselves, the Ombudsman said.

"To our mind, these circumstances are sufficient to establish the existence of conspiracy among the respondents to commit the act of defrauding the government of its funds," it said.

In another project, the Ombudsman said Ganaden and Mina conspired to bloat the project cost for the hauling of soil from the 230-kilovolt Tuguegarao switchyard, allowing them to pocket the excess amount.

In recommending the dismissal, investigator Adoracion Agbada rejected the former Napocor officials' motion for reconsideration and reinvestigation.

Aside from removal from service, Ganaden, Bautista and Narciso would be disqualified from government service. Their benefits would also be forfeited.

The respondents, along with a number of Napocor employees, are also facing criminal charges for graft, which remain pending before the regional trial courts in Isabela and Nueva Vizcaya.

The six complainants were among those who were retrenched in 2003 by the Napocor as part of its reorganization.

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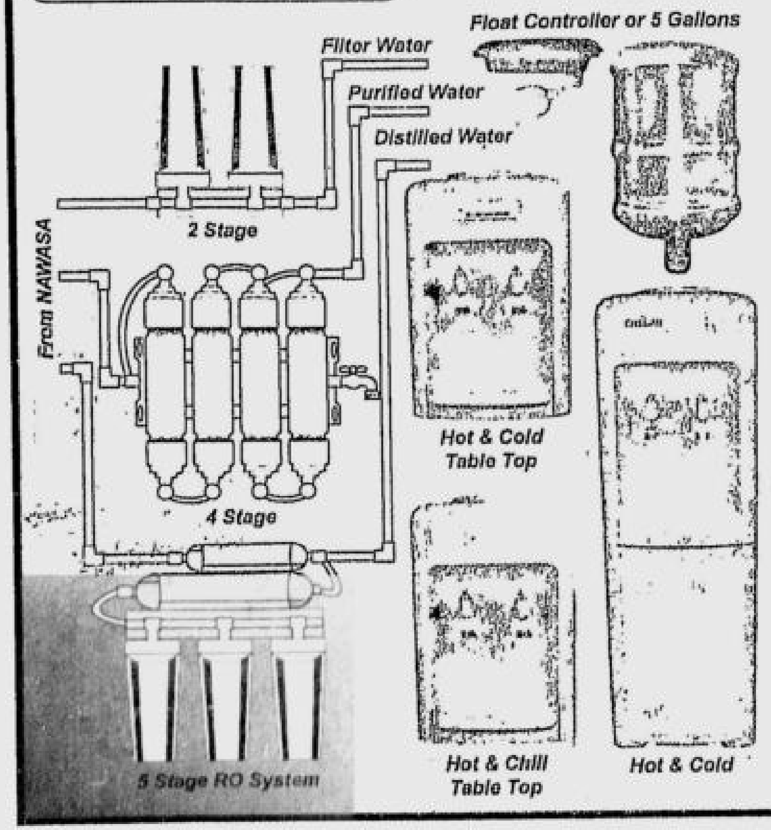

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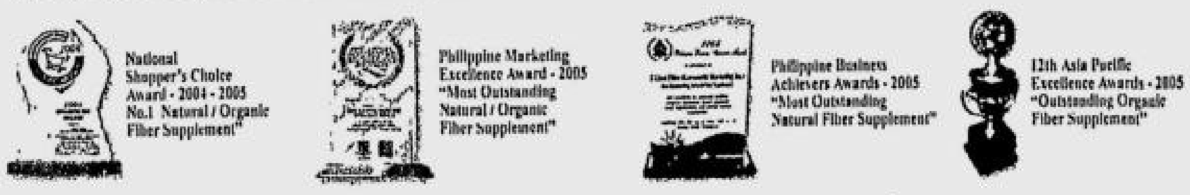

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Co-host of slain GenSan radioman foils slay try

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Two unidentified armed men tried to break into the house of a broadcast journalist in Polomolok, South Cotabato early Friday but immediately fled, thinking he was ready for them.

Tony Daniel, 44, co-hosted the radio program of slain broadcaster Rolando Morales, who was killed July 3 by eight gunmen on motorbikes.

Daniel said he had been receiving threats before the break-in attempt.

He told the INQUIRER that he was awakened by an unusual sound outside the house. When he peeped through the window, he saw a man wearing a black jacket. He opened the door and saw the man jump over the fence.

"The door knob clicked when I opened it. Maybe the suspect thought I was about to fire my gun, so he escaped," Daniel said.

He said he immediately reported the incident to the police.

During the investigation, it was learned that the intruder's companion was waiting on a motorcycle, about 50 meters from the Saint Gabriel Subdivision where Daniel's house is located.

Daniel said he believed that the same group that killed his partner wanted him killed.

On Sunday, a suspicious-looking man was seen outside the dxMD Radyo Agong station while he was hosting "Tingog sa Barangay (Voice of the village)," Daniel said.

He and Morales tackled illegal drugs among other sensitive issues in their program.

When Morales was killed, Daniel said the military provided him two escorts and a gun.

He admitted though these were not enough guarantees to his safety.

"What keeps me daring in my radio program despite the persistent death threats is a clear conscience. I have not done anything wrong against anybody. They were furious because I am against the proliferation of illegal drugs and other criminality in Polomolok. Only death can stop my advocacy," he said.

Rommel Rebollido, vice chair of the local chapter of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, called on authorities to show vigor and determination "to once and for all stop the media killings."

"Authorities should act swiftly with vigor, clear determination and decisiveness on incidents like this because the failure of lawmen to get those who kill and harm journalists puts in greater risk the lives of newsmen," Rebollido said.

Members of the Task Force Morales raided the house of Israel Saripa, one of the alleged suspects in the murder case.

Members of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Central Mindanao, led by Sr. Insp. Teody Condesa, and Polomolok policemen recovered two unlicensed handguns—a .38 cal. revolver and a .45 cal. pistol—including assorted bullets.

The task force also raided the house of Vicente Yongco, an official of Barangay Poblacion in Polomolok, who was implicated in the murder.

Yongco owns the three mobile phone numbers used in sending death threats to Morales and Daniel.

Yongco admitted that he was the owner of the mobile phone numbers but reasoned out that he lost the phones in January.

He denied any hand in the killing of Morales. "I could not afford to do that because we are relatives," he said.

The raiders seized from his compound a fragmentation grenade and assorted bullets.

Charges of illegal possession of firearms and explosives were being prepared against the suspects.

In Batangas, INQUIRER correspondent Mei Magsino-Lubis has gone into hiding after receiving information on July 7 that at least two prisoners from the provincial jail had been purportedly allowed to escape to carry out a mission to silence her.

She said the informant told her that the two fugitives were out to kill her when she appeared at the Regional Trial Court in Batangas City to post bail for an oral defamation case filed against her by Gov. Armando Sanchez.

Lutgardo Natanauan, provincial jail warden, denied that two of their prisoners had escaped. "All our inmates are duly accounted for. You can come here and see it for yourself," he told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

He said he did not know Lubis personally. "That's why I don't know how she came up with her past news report that there is 'jueteng' inside the jail. And now, here comes again another false report from her," he said.

Lubis also said her sister-in-law told her last week that they saw a gray Toyota Altis with five men in it conducting a stakeout near their compound.

Lubis' agony began after her interview with Sanchez on July 5, where the latter accused her of disrespect and uttering defamatory words.

She denied Sanchez's allegation. On the contrary, she said, it was the governor who shouted invectives at her.

Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

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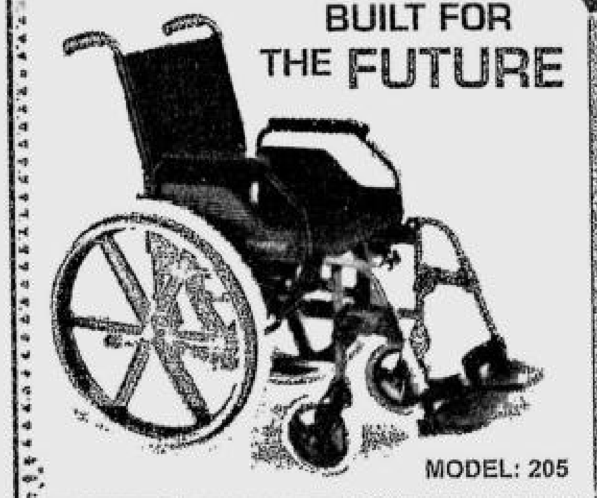

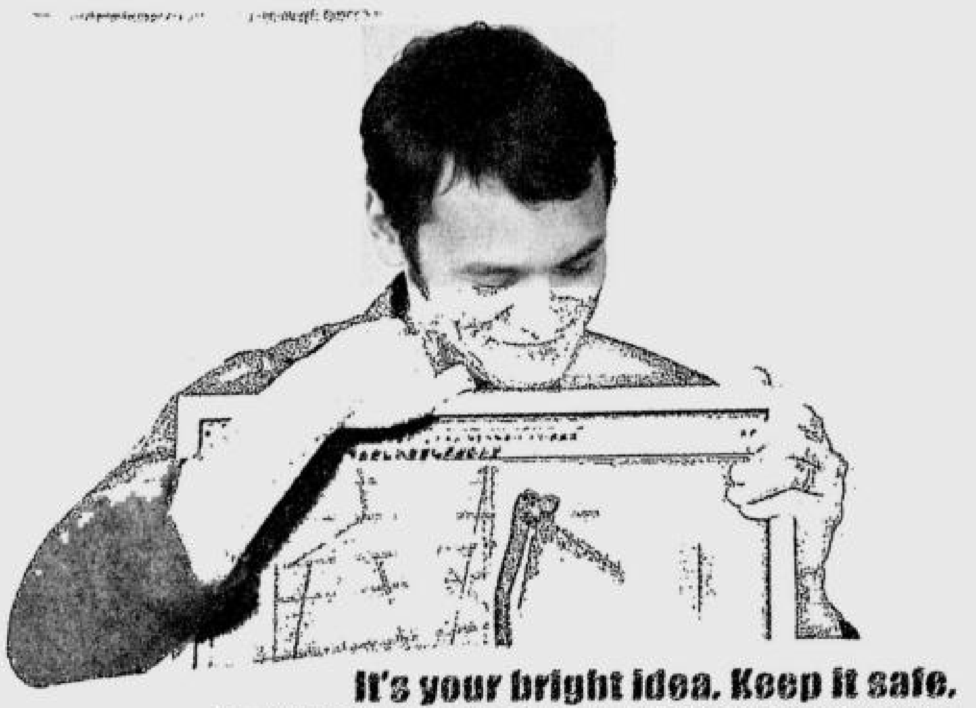

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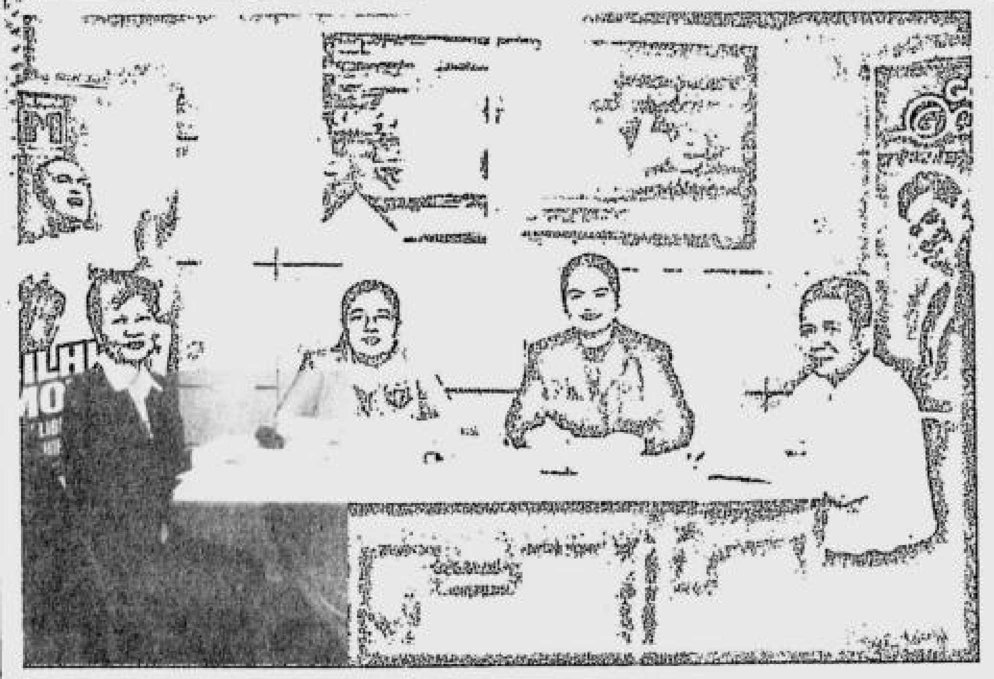

GLOBE SOLUTIONS FOR NATIONAL SME WEEK

The Department of Trade and Industry-Bureau of Small and Medium Enterprise Development recently partnered with Globe Telecom in providing business solutions to small and medium entrepreneurs during the National SME Week. Present during the discussion are (from left) Alice Opeña, DTI-SMED division chief, Rhodora Leaño, DTI-SMED director, Agnes Fernando, Globe SME channel head, sales and distribution, and Jerry Clavesillas, DTI-SMED assistant director.

DTI holds SMED Week

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry will hold the "Small and Medium Enterprise Development (SMED) Week" on July 20 at the Megatrade Hall 1, 5th Level, Building B, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. There will be seminars and lectures for potential entrepreneurs that would help them decide what business to begin.

Check out the schedule to find out which one would fit your interest:

July 20 to 23, Entrepreneurship Briefings, Function Room B, 5th Level, Building B., SM Megamall; July 20 to 24, SME Exposition 2005, a showcase of SME products, programs and services for SMEs, and a selling fair, Megatrade Hall 1, 5th Level, Building B, SM Megamall; July 18 to 22, Skills Training by the Cottage Industry Technology Center (CITC)-DTI, Bureau of Small and Medium Enterprise Development, 3F Oppen Building, 349 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave, Makati City; July 18 and 19, First National Conference on Entrepreneurship Education organized by the John Gokongwei School of Management, Ateneo de Manila University; July 18 to 24, Various Provincial Events (Call nearest DTI Provincial Office for details).

Pre-registration is necessary. To register, call DTI-CITC care of Jonah De Pedro at 941-4561 or 942-3974, 948-2875. For the livelihood skills training, a minimal fee will be charged to cover the cost of materials to be used in the training.

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Assess dangers in Quezon, Aurora, DENR urged

Deep soil cracks in Bohol village alarm officials

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—At least 19 more families were evacuated in Barangay Mayana in Jagna, Bohol as deep soil cracks reached the houses beside the national highway going to the nearby town of Sierra Bullones.

Jagna Mayor Exutero Lloren yesterday said town officials were alarmed by the continued soil movement and felt helpless.

"We could not do anything except to monitor the area and evacuate the affected residents," Lloren said.

He sent dump trucks to Barangay Mayana on Friday afternoon after the barangay chair asked for assistance in relocating 19 families or over 100 people, and their belongings to the barangay hall, he said.

The evacuation of the 19 families brought to 29 the number of families affected by the soil movement. Those in the first batch had to be moved on July 11 after their houses were destroyed when the land gave way.

Lloren said the municipal council declared a state of calamity in Mayana on Wednesday so they could release part of the town's calamity fund to assist the affected families.

The municipal and provincial governments will extend P10,000 each to the affected families, aside from providing them with rice and canned goods, he said.

He said he would no longer allow residents to build houses in the area because of the risk of another cave-in or landslide.

He said the national highway was not yet affected by the deep cracks, but the houses beside the road were in grave danger of falling into the widening cracks.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources recommended to Jagna officials a permanent evacuation of the families affected in last Monday's landslide.

Al Emil Berador, MGB's Geo-Sciences Division chief, said the landslide and cracks of soil were seen in some 50 hectares of land in Mayana.

Berador said the movement of the soil still continued and they even heard the movements when they went to the area.

Berador and other geologists of MGB-7 visited the barangay on Thursday to investigate why the big portion of the village caved in on Monday noon.

He said the cracks started in the forested and slightly sloping ground where the main landslide happened.

Berador explained that the affected area was sitting on the debris of an old landslide that had already stabilized for years.

But with the recent heavy downpour, the soil became unstable again, resulting to massive soil slide.

He said they also found that the ground of the affected area was made of limestone. The limestone ground lies above mudstones, sandstones and siltstones, which can be softened once it is saturated by water, he added.

"With the softened foundation of the limestone ground, it would cave in," Berador said.

LUCENA CITY—To prevent disasters in the light of the coming typhoon "Feria," Sen. Richard Gordon, chair of the Philippine National Red Cross, called on the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to assess possible dangers and immediately relocate persons in the high-risk areas of Quezon and Aurora.

Gordon recalled that after last year's disaster, the DENR had committed itself to study the dangerous and high-risk areas and to coordinate in the relocation of people and communities in the two provinces.

On Friday, the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration warned that the country, particularly northern Luzon, should brace for rains in the next 48 hours following the entry of Feria into the Philippine area of responsibility.

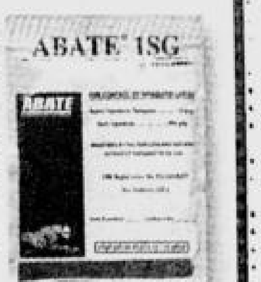
The senator said that in his recent travel in the towns of Real, Infanta and General Nakar in Quezon, and Baler and Dingalan in Aurora, he observed that many people were still located in harm's way.

"Their houses remain on exposed and unstable slopes, waiting for the next landslide and flash flood to wash away their lives and their livelihood," Gordon said in a statement sent to the INQUIRER.

The senator stressed that the DENR must act immediately to prevent a recurrence of last year's disaster in the Quezon and Aurora areas and in Southern Leyte, where homes were swept away and hundreds were buried alive.

THOUSANDS of uprooted trees from the Sierra Madre helped kill people and destroy homes in Quezon and Aurora last year. PDI PHOTO

In November last year, after four successive typhoons, close to 1,000 people perished in killer floods and landslides and millions of pesos worth of property were destroyed in Real, Infanta and General Nakar towns. Gordon said the DENR must do all it can and be diligent in protecting the lives of the people. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



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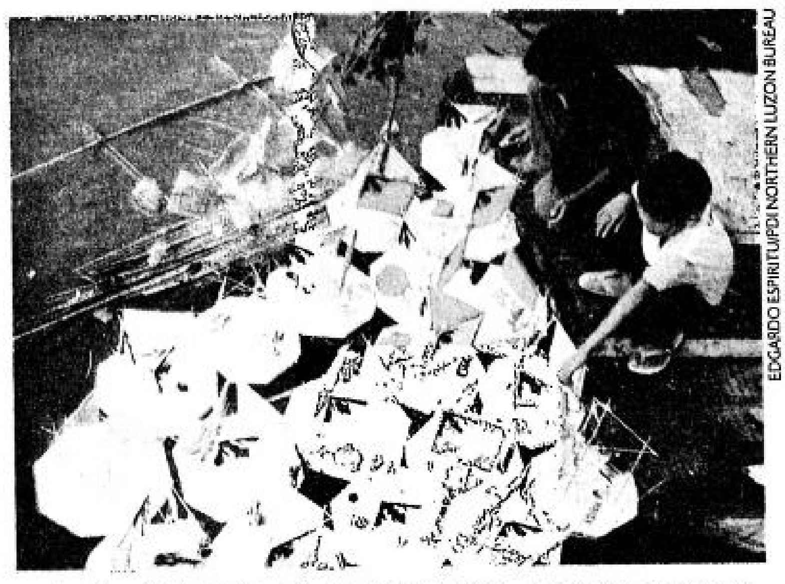
Still no 'super cities' 15 years after 1990 quake

By Vincent Cabreza and Yolanda Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau



EDGARDO ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

BAGUIO artists sail exotically designed sailboats at the Burnham lake on Friday to remember the people who died during the July 16, 1990, earthquake that hit Baguio City.

BAGUIO CITY—Where are the redeveloped cities that were supposed to rise from the devastation caused by the earthquake of July 16, 1990?

Some of the best minds of the world went into designing new urban landscapes for the cities of Baguio and Dagupan, which were hit hard by two 7.7-magnitude earthquakes that came 54 seconds apart.

Most of Baguio's buildings collapsed, killing more than 2,000 people, while establishments in coastal Dagupan City sank.

From 1992 to 1994, urban management experts from Spain, Britain, the United States and Asia drew up designs for post-earthquake "super cities" for the Baguio-Dagupan urban planning project (BDUPP).

The chief advantage offered by these new cities, according to the project, was a psychological sense of order because they steer away people and infrastructure from the path of future earthquakes.

But as Northern Luzon remembered the earthquake's 15th anniversary on Friday, the plans were also remembered.

At the University of the Philippines Baguio, Councilor Edilberto Tenefrancia said Baguio's leaders failed to act on the momentum to fulfill the vision of an earthquake-resistant city.

Two months after the earthquake in 1990, civic leaders, residents, students and Baguio old timers organized a congress to map out plans to rebuild the summer capital.

In the August-September 1990 edition of the defunct weekly Gold Ore, the late editor Jose Nicolas Ilagan said the congress had anticipated the loss of Baguio's educational and tourism drawing power, which could result in fiscal and social deterioration unless residents took matters into their own hands.

The result of the congress was a master plan for a decongested Baguio, a city built by the American government in 1909.

Baguio would have been decongested by sharing its investors, residential and manufacturing areas and university and commercial districts with the neighboring towns of La Trinidad, Itogon, Sablan and Tuba in Benguet.

Tenefrancia said the plans were perfect, but political survival again overcame idealism.

During the forum, Neoman de la Cruz, Cordillera director of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, presented a geologic map that identifies the city's geological hazards.

But he said the map remained a novelty to the curious after noting the growth of communities lying on fault lines and waterways.

Despite memories of the killer quake, Baguio still allows its residents to buy lands that have been declared "geologically hazardous," Tenefrancia said.

Political accommodation curtails government demolition orders that date back to 1990, he said. The present city council discovered this anomaly on Monday, Tenefrancia said, but solutions have not been forthcoming.

Based on the BDUPP, Dagupan investments and its commercial district would have been farmed out to the towns of Mangaldan and Calasiao, according to a similar metropolitan theory that characterized a post-earthquake Baguio City.

But Dagupan officials buckled under pressure from local businessmen who refused to relocate.

Except for a sunken building dating back to 1990, Dagupan has long gotten over those memories, an official said.

Photographs of the destruction were displayed at the City Museum as an afterthought after acting Mayor Alvin Fernandez decided earlier to forego with a commemorative program.

Tenefrancia said the earthquake's lesson to local officials and residents "is that it can happen again."

ROUNDUP

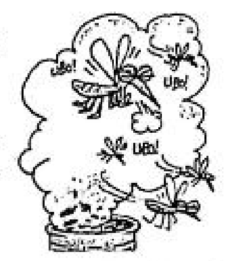
War games cancelled

CAMP SIONGCO, Maguindanao—The second round of military exercises between the Philippines and the US military in Carmen, North Cotabato scheduled for Aug. 15 was called off because of the holding of elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. "There was a schedule for another military exercise in Carmen, but the venue was transferred to Luzon because of the scheduled ARMM polls," Maj. Gen. Agustin Dema-ala, commander of the Army's 6th Infantry Division, told the INQUIRER. Last year, US troops trained soldiers under the 6th ID on counterterrorism.

Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Organic smoke vs dengue

COTABATO CITY—Smoke went up during the Department of Health's D-Day here Friday as residents waged war on mosquitoes by simultaneously burning organic materials for the government's antidengue fever campaign. Dr. Abdullah Dumama Jr., chief of the city health office, alerted residents through text messaging that a massive smoke-generation activity would start with an unusual 4 p.m. citywide siren. Mayor Muslimin Sema said around 15,000 households responded to the call, citing reports from city health authorities and sanitary officers. The burning created a haze over the city, but health and local government executives were happy with the result. Dumama said his office had so far recorded 345 cases of the mosquito-borne dengue fever this year alone. The Cotabato Regional Medical Center had monitored 429 cases, which could include patients from nearby towns.



Nash B. Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau

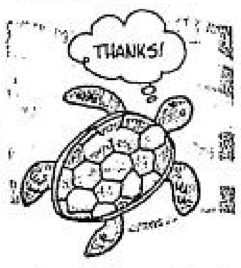
3 NPA rebels slain

CAMP MELCHOR DELA CRUZ, Isabela—Three suspected New People's Army rebels were killed in a 30-minute clash with government soldiers in Ilagan, Isabela, on Friday night, an Army official said. Maj. Victor Tanggawohn Jr., spokesperson of the Army's 5th Infantry Division, said the gunfight broke out in the mountain village of Minabang at about 9:30 p.m. Tanggawohn identified the two fatalities as Jay Valencia, said to be the team leader of the NPA Northern Front-Cagayan Valley Regional Committee, and Romulo Cambre. No government soldier was reported hurt in the clash.

Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Back to sea for turtle

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—A giant turtle was released on Friday by the city's Bantay Dagat personnel. The turtle weighed about 100 kilos and had to be carried by five men when it was released in Honda Bay. It bore small bruises that might have been inflicted when it was accidentally trapped in a fish coral in Barangay Inagawan. The turtle, estimated to be 50 years old, was tagged with a wildlife identification before it was released to the sea.



Jofelle P. Tesorio, PDI southern Luzon Bureau

Rice mill owner killed

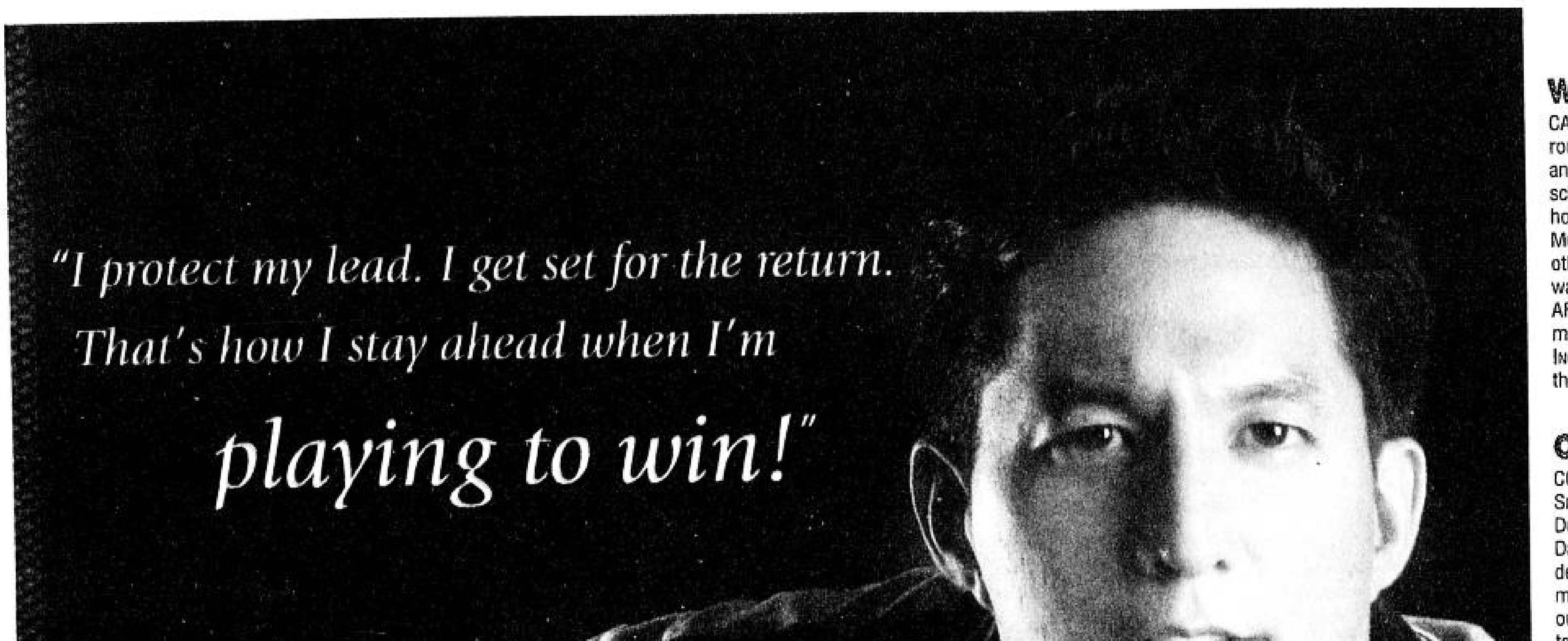
LOS BAÑOS, Laguna—Police are hunting down the killer of the owner of Goodrich Ricemill Machines Parts and Sack Supply here during a robbery on Tuesday. Police identified the victim as Eduardo M. Fernandez, 55, of Lapitan Compound, Barangay Maahas, and the suspect as Carlo Capay-Capay, stay-in helper of the victim. Fernandez died from wounds in different parts of the body. His assailant also took his cell phone and gun, and P100,000 cash from the store, police said.

Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

NBI-Bicol exec killed

NAGA CITY—The executive officer of the National Bureau of Investigation in Bicol and another person were killed early Saturday when their vehicles collided at the junction of Almeda Highway here. NBI executive officer Artemio Magdaraog, the second highest NBI official in the region, was in his Mitsubishi pick-up and about to enter the highway from Maharlika Highway when a Filcab van, driven by a certain Christopher Llorin, hit his vehicle at past 4 a.m. Magdaraog and Llorin were brought to separate hospitals and declared dead on arrival. Llorin's companions survived and were recuperating in the hospital.

Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau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Scientists urge culture of endangered species

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Scientists from Southeast Asia and Japan are calling for intensified efforts to increase the stocks of threatened marine species to counter threats to food security in the region.

They made the appeal on Friday at the end of the three-day regional technical consultation on stock enhancement conducted by the aquaculture department of the Iloilo-based Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center (Seafdec).

Among those identified as threatened are sea horses, giant clams, top shells, corals, sea cucumbers, whales and dolphins, marine turtles, sharks and rays. The capture, collection, trade and utilization of these species are banned under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) and other international agreements.

Sea cucumbers, sea horses and giant clams are among the species that are endangered across the region, said Wilfredo Yap, Seafdec external affairs officer and head of the agency's research division.

"These species [are] still being harvested but there is concern that these may get decimated in the near future," Yap told the INQUIRER.

The experts agreed on an eight-point resolution to improve the stock enhancement activities and programs in their countries of species under international concern.

Stock enhancement is the practice of culturing young fish and releasing them into the waters to strengthen or increase fish stocks. This has been resorted to by several countries, especially Japan, as part of comprehensive efforts to address the problem of increasingly depleted marine resources.

The consultation was attended by 55 participants from Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Burma, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines.

The country representatives presented papers that identified endangered species in their areas and on stock enforcement efforts.

Hundreds of marine species were identified as "threatened" or "endangered" by the participants based on the lists of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, CITES and their respective governments.

The depletion of these species is blamed mainly on over-fishing, hunting and collecting for food and trade.

Hanh Choundara of Laos said the causes of declining species included illegal fishing, over-fishing and water pollution by oil and mining industries.

In Vietnam, the depletion is blamed on growing population of communities that have led to high demand of seafood and lack of information and understanding of fishers, according to the paper presented by Thai Ngoc Chien. He said aquatic animal resources have been "overexploited" and in some areas declining.

In their resolution, the participants agreed that stock enhancement should be undertaken as part of an integrated management strategy for sustainable use and conversion of aquatic resources.

They pointed out that stock enhancement should be considered only if other interventions, such as reducing fishing pressure and enhancement and restoration of the habitat, have proven ineffective.

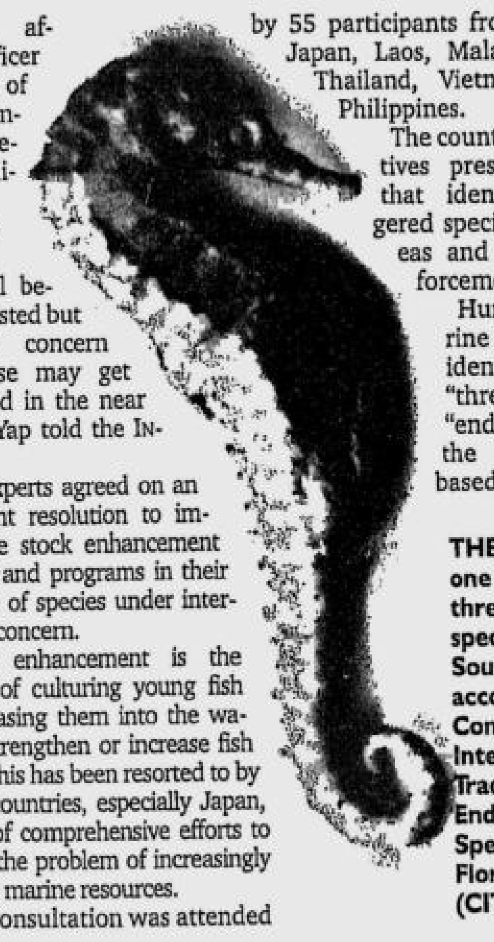
Jurgenne Primavera of Seafdec said protection of the habitat and reducing fishing pressure should be given priority because these were essential in ensuring that stock enhancement efforts would be effective.

The participants also agreed that whenever possible, indigenous species should be used for stock enhancement and that technological support should be strengthened to the member-countries covered by Seafdec.

Yap said the countries in the region should address technological problems, such as efficient marking and tagging of released stocks to effectively monitor their survival rate.

Speaker Jose De Venecia Jr., who was guest during the conclusion of the meeting, said he hoped that governments of the countries in the region would devote significant amounts of their budgets to food production and to check the depletion of the marine resources.

Yap acknowledged that efforts to restore marine resources would be a long process. "It would not take place in our generation but maybe [in the generation of] our children's children."



THE SEAHORSE is one of the many threatened species in Southeast Asia, according to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES). FILE PHOTO

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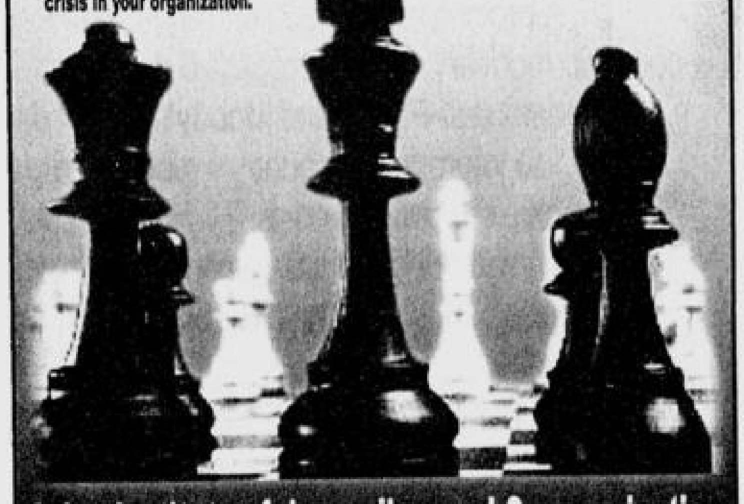

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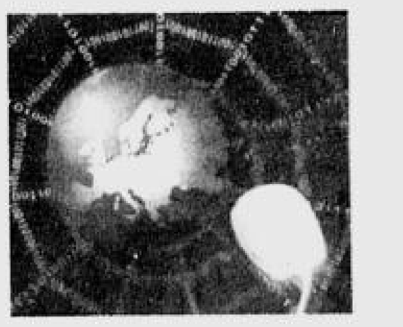

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Opposition unfazed by pro-GMA rally

From page A1

peachment complaint against Ms Arroyo in the House of Representatives.

"Our lawyers are rethinking their position ... they had thought it [impeachment] would be an impossible fight. But now we are leaving no stone unturned," said Anzures.

Apparently heartened by the turnout in Luneta, Malacañang thanked supporters for joining the prayer rally and said this showed that many Filipinos wanted the rule of law to prevail in resolving the political crisis facing the country. *(See related story on Page A9.)*

Ejercito belittled the Arroyo show of force.

"It was a rent-a-crowd rally. It was obvious that the people were paid just to attend the administration rally," he said.

Ejercito added the Luneta crowd could not be compared to opposition supporters who went to Makati because of their "conviction."

JV thankful, too

For a reason different from that of Bunye, Ejercito was thankful to administration leaders for organizing the Luneta rally.

"We would like to thank them for giving many people an opportunity to earn even for just a day," Ejercito said.

Both camps have accused each of recruiting ralliers to attend their mass actions.

Several administration members have claimed that opposition members required their employees to join the July 13 Makati protest.

Even the police favored the administration ralliers, Ejercito said.

He said he saw buses ferrying people to Luneta being escorted by motorcycle-riding policemen.

Rallies won't solve problems

"This is unlike during our rally, when policemen blocked the buses carrying our supporters, saying the buses were out of line," Ejercito said.

Anzures conceded the Luneta rally might have attracted more crowds but added: "As the administration said, this is not a popularity contest. Even if they say they had a bigger rally, it doesn't make their call any more valid."

He also said the UNO was undeterred in its goal of banishing Ms Arroyo from Malacañang.

"No amount of rallies, regardless of the numbers, will solve our problems. Even if they rally millions behind her, she still has to answer to the issue," he said.

"Even if there is only one man shouting in the streets that she cheated in the elections and that she is an illegitimate President, she still should answer to the issue."

Students complain

Students complained yesterday that they were required to attend the pro-Arroyo rally.

High school students belonging to the militant group Anakbayan said some of their members were required to attend as part of their National Service Training Program (NSTP).

The NSTP is a new version of the old Citizens Army Training (CAT) and the Reserved Officers Training Corps (ROTC) programs.

"How desperate can this government get that it is now employing underhanded schemes to manipulate innocent high school students? This is pure blackmail," Xaviera Vasquez, Anakbayan-High School chair.

In a press statement, Vasquez said government employees were also compelled to participate in the rally, according to a memorandum supposedly issued by Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.

Employees and students were even made to sign "attendance sheets" as proof of their presence.

'Desperate for support'

Anakbayan is a co-convenor of Youth Dare (Youth Demanding Arroyo's Removal), a broad alliance of youth and students from different schools, communities and universities.

Youth Dare spokesperson Raymond Palatino said the Arroyo administration "is so desperate to get the youth's support that her staunch allies had to compel students to go to Luneta.

Palatino confirmed that several student groups complained to Youth Dare that they were required by their school administrators to join the rally as an academic requirement. Cadets and community volunteers of the NSTP in different schools were also obliged by their commandants to attend the gathering in Luneta, Palatino said. *With a report from Alcuin Papa*

TRADE UNION CONGRESS OF THE PHILIPPINES (TUCP)

A CALL TO OUR LEADERS: HEED THE ECONOMY, IT'S TIME TO MOVE ON

A prolonged impasse on raging political controversies dooms any hope for a quick, dramatic economic recovery. The successive downgrades from reputable credit rating agencies such as Fitch, Standard and Poor's and Moody's reflect decreasing investors' confidence despite all efforts to improve the country's global competitiveness. It is unfair that while politicians seek to resolve the political crisis, Filipino workers, here and abroad, are left to fend on their own without clear assurances of permanent solutions to unemployment, inflation, poverty, the budget deficit, food security, among many other things.

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ADVT.

Gap between Metro Manila, provinces works in favor of GMA

From page A1

that there is a constituency from which the administration can mobilize mass support in a showdown in the streets which have increasingly become the decisive battleground to break the political stalemate.

Provincial and local governments have rallied behind the administration, and the crisis has reopened the historical cleavage between the national government and localities which have long bristled at the central government's domination of decision-making over allocation of power and resources.

Binay vs Atienza

The turnout at the Luneta and Makati demonstrated the mass mobilization capacity of key urban power centers—Mayor Jejomar Binay of Makati, the center of anti-Arroyo movements, including the Oakwood mutiny by young military officers, and of Mayor Lito Atienza of Manila and Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. of Quezon City.

Both Atienza and Belmonte delivered the numbers at the Luneta in what is now developing into a numbers game even before the impeachment complaint being prepared against Ms Arroyo for allegedly cheating in the 2004 presidential election has been decided by Congress, in which a numbers game will also be played out.

What saved the administration from collapse and allowed Ms Arroyo to rally her forces to halt a bandwagon effect was the disunity in the business community and the political opposition, which have not found a unifying leader to replace her. Of big help to Ms Arroyo was the refusal of the Roman Catholic bishops to join the resignation call, which is loudest in the streets, and the neutrality of the military.

It appears, therefore, that the Arroyo administration's survival is not going to be decided solely in the streets of Metro Manila, where a strong opinion against the administration prevails, and in the strategic institutions based in the capital—the Cabinet, the bureaucracy, the business community, and the military.

Power balance

The local governments have emerged as a significant element in determining the power balance in the capital. This dichotomy between Imperial Manila and the provinces has been revived by the crisis.

This is not an artificial divide. It has historical roots reaching back to the development of a strong central government that has been battling local power centers and warlords since the early years of the installation of the civil government to establish its authority over them.

This cleavage is working in favor of Ms Arroyo as she tries to build support from local authorities to counter the weight of Manila-based institutions. Local authorities have refused to be stampeded by Manila-based movements seeking to topple the President.

Metro Manila, with its heavy concentration of urban poor, has been the recruitment ground of middle class-led people power movements. Edsa I and Edsa II hardly caused a ripple in most provincial cities. Distress felt among the urban poor in Metro Manila is not as acute as the one felt by the rural poor who are less organized.

Impeachment

As the crisis was transformed into a battle for the streets in Metro Manila last week, impeachment appeared to have gained ground as the least disruptive option to end the stalemate that is sending the country's constitutional system to the edge of political and economic breakdown.

In a telephone survey conducted by Social Weather Stations on July 12-14 in Metro Manila, it found an overwhelming opinion in favor of impeachment. Eighty-four percent said Ms Arroyo should be impeached if she refused to resign. However, 62 percent said she should resign.

Even so, almost all (91 percent) of those wanting the President to resign and 76 percent of those saying she should not resign favored impeachment. This finding reflects a certain ambivalence on the part of the respondents.

Resignation and impeachment are mutually exclusive. You can't have both at the same time. Resignation represents a fast-track resolution of the crisis; impeachment is a lengthy process.

Lesson from Erap case

The impeachment of former President Joseph Estrada provides lessons. The impeachment process then ran for two months from Nov. 13, 2000 when the House of Representatives endorsed the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate to Jan. 16, 2001 when the Senate voted 11-10 not to open the second envelope containing evidence of Estrada's secret bank accounts. This sparked the spontaneous mass protest movement that shifted the trial of Estrada from the impeachment arena back to the streets.

The oust-Estrada movement, already waning by then, received a new life from the suppression of evidence contained in the second envelope. The mass demonstration in Edsa II triggered the military withdrawal of support from Estrada.

Assuming Ms Arroyo will be impeached, she can't be fast-tracked into resigning while impeachment is under way. For the duration of the trial, she will remain the President. Impeachment can buy her time while giving her a forum to defend herself.

But when the streets are volatile, an unexpected triggering event—such as the envelope episode—can't be ruled out.

Makati City sets construction of center for youth in crime

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A PLACE of redemption and an opportunity for change.

Youth offenders in Makati City will soon have a home while in detention, after the Makati Social Welfare Department (MSWD) set the construction of a center for juvenile offenders, who are currently sharing the Makati City Jail with adult suspects.

Getting mixed with adult detainees expose youth offenders to more bad influence, said MSWD head Marjorie de Veyra.

"That's why it's important for us to have a separate detention center for them," she added.

The construction of a facility for young people in conflict with the law is part of Makati City's Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) for Children, which the city council recently adopted through the passage of Ordinance No. 2005-033.

Holistic program

The MTDP, said De Veyra, is a holistic program for the protection and welfare of Makati's children. It encompasses projects from this year to 2009.

Foremost among the plans is the construction of a rehabilitation center for crime suspects 17 years old and below.

"We believe they are still the nation's hope, and we can't imagine them mingling with adult crime suspects. Although inmates are innocent unless proven otherwise, it's still different if we mix youth offenders with them," De Veyra told the INQUIRER.

The city has the Crisis Center, a facility for counseling and rehabilitation of abused women and children, and the Social Development Center (SDC), a reception center for street children, but has no detention facility for juvenile delinquents.

The neighboring cities of Pasay, Manila, and Quezon, among others, already have their own separate detention centers for minors in trouble with the law.

De Veyra said the multisectoral Local Council for Children already began planning for the construction of the youth detention center.

Eyed to serve as temporary detention center is the 3rd floor of the SDC, said De Veyra.

The council has also consulted the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology, for possible security assistance.

Currently, five youth offenders are detained in a separate cell inside the Makati City Jail, adjacent to cells of adults undergoing trial. The so-called "juveniles in conflict with the law"—four boys and a girl—are awaiting the court's disposition of their cases.

De Veyra explained that only the five young detainees remained in the City Jail since the rest had been "released in recognizance," a special arrangement where a youth detainee is released to his parents or guardians, like barangay leaders or parish priests, pending disposition of his case.

Those still detained may either have had a problem in producing their birth certificates as proof of age, or the courts where they were being tried deemed it risky to release the youth offenders to their own parents.

Child-friendly, too

"We want to show that Makati is a child-friendly city, through prioritizing programs for the youth. And since we could not avoid having children getting involved in crime, we believe they can still be reformed," De Veyra said.

For the first half of the year, the MSWD has registered a total of 61 criminal cases involving children. Among the offenses, the crime most often committed was theft, with 24 cases.

Of the remaining cases, six were for robbery, and five for rape.

Seven minors were arrested for illegal gambling, while five others were apprehended for vandalism.

The period from January to June has shown a downtrend in the number of criminal acts reportedly committed by minors. From 17 registered cases in January, only five were reported in June.

Water board to go after motels, condos

By Blanche S. Rivera

LIFE may soon no longer be a bed of roses for motel owners in Metro Manila as the government prepares to run after establishments that do not have water extracting permits.

The National Water Resources Board has identified motels as among the most frequent violators of the Water Code, along with condominiums, a few big malls and about 10 golf courses.

NWRB executive director Ramon Alikpala said the agency was looking closely at the commercial sector for violators of the Water Code, which was recently amended by the NWRB board.

"We're looking at malls, office buildings, hotels, condominiums. There are so many motels that have no (water extraction) permits," Alikpala said.

The NWRB is seeking the immediate implementation of the amended Water Code, which imposes stiffer penalties for violators.

From a negligible one-time fine of P1,000 for erring establishments, the new implementing rules and regulations (IRR) charge from P500 to P1,000 for every day of violation.

The P500-per-day fine is for "light offenses" committed usually by domestic users, like undertaking repairs without giving proper notice and failure to record monthly water withdrawals.

The P800-per-day fine is for "less grave offenses" like diversion of water in an open canal or reservoir and unauthorized utilization of an existing well.

Grave offenses such as water extraction without a permit, unauthorized sale or transfer of water permits, rights and water, or abandonment of wells without proper plugging, would fetch P1,000-a-day fines.

Alikpala said the NWRB could also file criminal charges against perpetual violators who fail to correct their systems after payment of fines. Criminal liability could cost them three years in jail, he said.

The NWRB has identified at least seven golf courses in Metro Manila and Rizal that have no permit for water extraction but continue to operate.

Among these are Veterans Golf Course, Camp Aguinaldo Golf Club, Philippine Navy Golf Club, Villamor Golf Club, Club Intramuros Golf Course, Capitol Hills Golf and Country Club, and Eastridge Golf Club.

Only Wack-Wack Golf Club and Valley Golf have permits, while Manila Golf Club has a pending application for a water permit.

"They just pay the fine because it's easier to do that than get a permit; that's why we're changing the law," Alikpala said.

He also identified Landmark in Makati, Rustans in Cubao and Pacific Star building on Makati Avenue as erring establishments that the NWRB intended to prosecute.

The amended IRR of the Water Code was finalized in April but signed by Environment Secretary Michael Defensor only last week.

History quiz for disabled today

THE NATIONAL Historical Institute (NHI) and the National Council for the Welfare of the Disabled Persons (NCWDP) will hold a history quiz for persons with disabilities at 9 a.m. to 12 noon today at the audio-visual room of the institute building on T.M. Kalaw Street, Ermita, Manila.

Dubbed "Paligsahan sa Kasaysayan at Kultura ng may 'K,'" the contest is in commemoration of the 141st birth anniversary of Apolinario Mabini, the brains of the Philippine Revolution, and the 27th National Disability Prevention and Rehabilitation Week.

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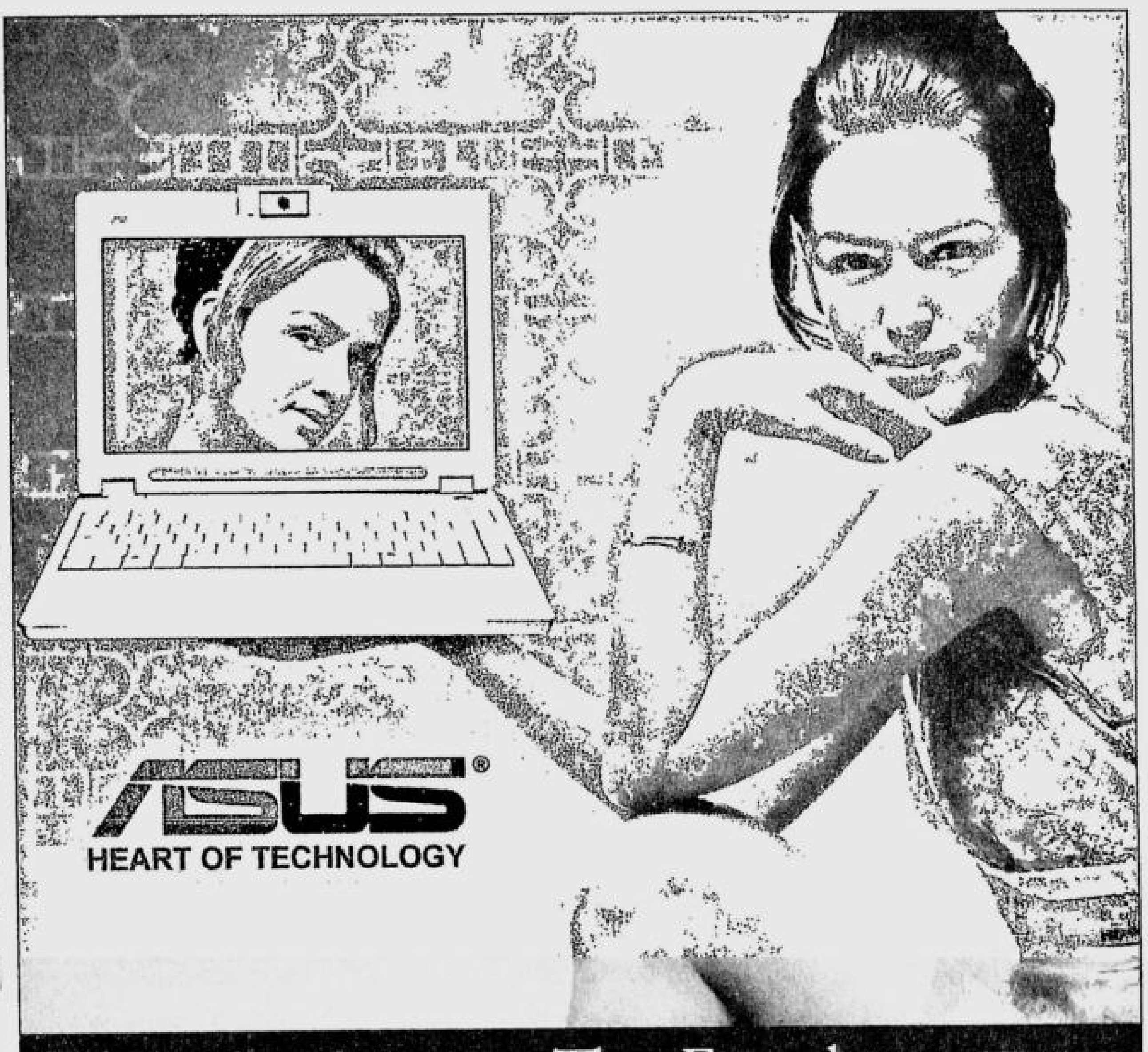

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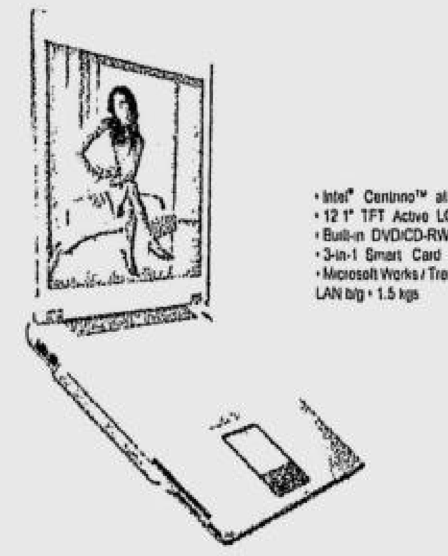

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Marikina cautions against fowl meat

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

BE CAREFUL of what you buy.

Fearing that banned meat products from China might have already slipped into the markets, the Marikina City Veterinary Office told its residents to be vigilant when buying meat.

The warning came after the National Meat Inspection Services (NMIS) recently intercepted and confiscated banned meat products from China, a memorandum signed by city veterinarian Manuel Carlos said.

The memorandum is being distributed to business establishments in the city, according to the city public information office.

Seized products

Among the products seized by the NMIS were hundreds of kilos of frozen Peking duck, young pigeon, frozen chicken, beef tendon, frozen suckling pig, pork ham and pork *longganisa*, the memorandum said.

The banned products were not only undocumented, but were also suspected of being contaminated with foot and mouth disease or even the bird flu, a deadly illness affecting birds which has also recently been found in humans.

Health officials said humans get infected with the deadly bird flu through contact with the saliva, nasal secretions and feces of infected birds.

No infection through meat

There is no evidence that humans can get infected by eating poultry meat and eggs. However, consumers are advised to thoroughly cook poultry.

The Department of Agriculture recently discovered three ducks in a small farm in Bulacan to be infected, but only with a "low-pathogen flu strain" and not the deadly H5N1 strain, which has killed more than 50 people in Asia since an outbreak was reported in 2003.

To make sure the products they buy are safe, consumers should patronize only government-accredited markets.

Accredited slaughterhouses

The Marikina City government assured its residents that all meat products sold in city public markets also come from government-accredited slaughterhouses.

These pass through strict inspection by the City Veterinary Office.

Just as it has been conducting training on proper meat handling for meat handlers in public markets, the city government also announced it would soon be holding seminars for consumers.

CPD gets new name, albeit unofficially

DON'T be surprised if, suddenly, you fail to find the Central Police District or CPD.

In an effort to make the CPD more distinguishable among the five police districts in Metro Manila, the local police leadership decided to call it the Quezon City Police District or the QCPD.

Although the name change is not official, police officers have begun referring to the district as QCPD since the beginning of July, said its director Chief Supt. Nicasio Radovan Jr.

"It's a better name because it gives the district a more distinct identity," he said, adding that people at times get confused because of the old name.

Old name painted over

The billboard near the district headquarters at Camp Karingal has been painted over to show the new name.

"The change in name is only logical since CPD covers only Quezon City," Radovan said.

He said the Western Police District was also about to change its name to the Manila Police District.

Only Quezon City and Manila have police districts limited to themselves.

The rest of the districts cover a cluster of cities or towns, such as the Northern Police District, which encompasses Caloocan City, Malabon City, Navotas and Valenzuela City.

Metro police chief Director Vidal Querol is expected to make the name change official, Radovan said.

DJ Yap

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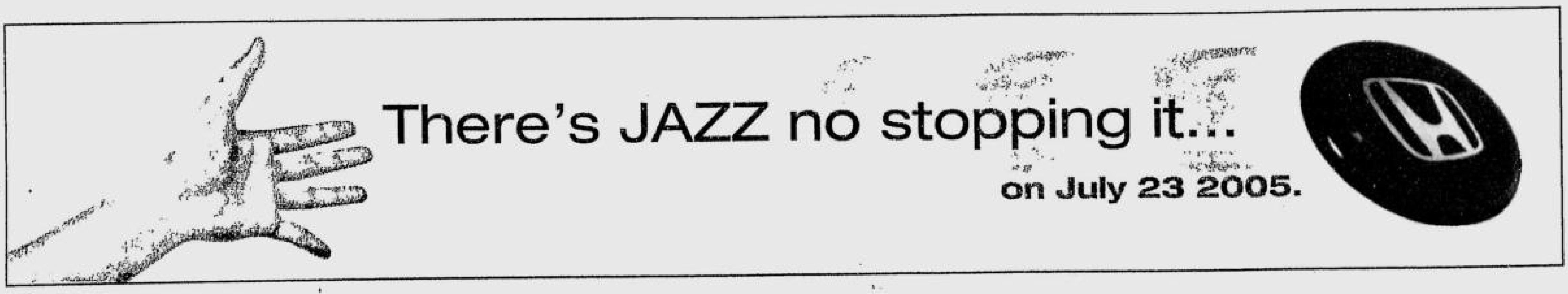
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Compiled by L. Manguiat

GOLF: 2005 Open Championship Final Round; 8:30 p.m.; ESPN – Take another look at the final round of action.
CYCLING: Tour de France, Stage 15; 1 p.m.; ESPN – Can Lance Armstrong win his seventh title?
MOTOR SPORTS: 2005 F1 British Grand Prix Highlights; 7 p.m.; STAR Sports.

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Maroons surge; UE stuns La Salle

By Jasmine W. Payo

AN UNLIKELY hero turned up for the unlikely leaders.

Rookie guard Axel Doruelo took charge as the University of the Philippines Maroons pummeled the National University Bulldogs, 81-59, yesterday to grab the solo lead in the UAAP basketball tournament at the Blue Eagle Gym in Loyola Heights, Quezon City.

Doruelo, a 22-year-old graduate student, drilled in 20 points and grabbed 12 rebounds to lead the Maroons to their third straight triumph.

"Being on top is nice, but it's too early (in the tournament)," said coach Lito Vergara. "We now have to forget the first three games."

The Pumaren brothers figured in a tighter contest, as Dindo's spunky University of the East Warriors shocked Franz's favored but listless La Salle Archers, 57-56.

Marcy Arellano buried the game-clinching triple that gave the Warriors a crucial 56-53 advantage with 1:34 left.

Although not many predicted that the Warriors would win and improve to a 2-1 record, coach Dindo Pumaren believed his young crew had a good fighting chance against the defending champions.

"We started out strong," he said. "We showed up ready to play and I saw it with the way they (Warriors) moved; their game face, it was there."

Freshman center Angelus Raymundo led the Warriors with 13 points and 10 rebounds, while Arellano, the 2004 Rookie of the Year, added 12 markers.

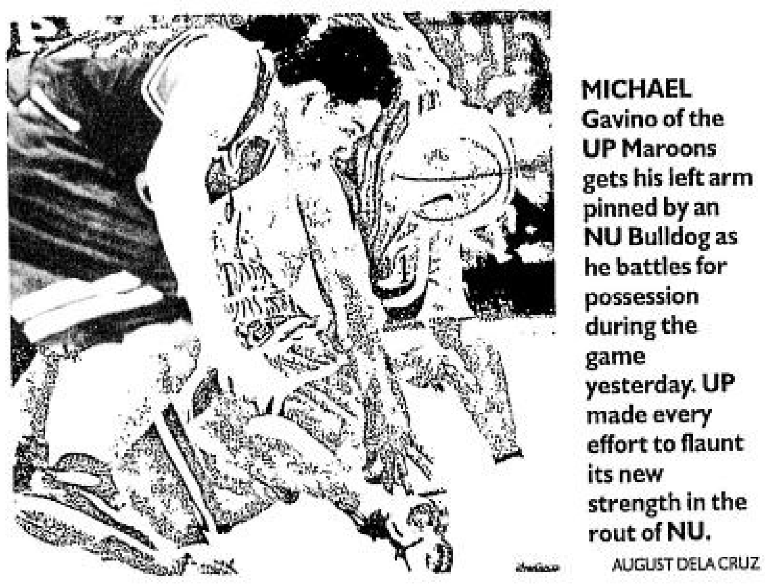
The Archers absorbed their second straight setback after absorbing a stunning 61-56 defeat at the hands of the UP Maroons last Thursday.

After Elmer Espiritu split his free throws to give the Warriors the slimmest of margins, 57-56. Joseph Yeo tried to salvage a win for the Archers but missed a triple in the dying seconds.

The Warriors got their up-tempo game going in the fourth quarter, mounting an 8-0 comeback to wrest the lead, 46-45, after trailing at 38-45.

The Archers managed to pull even on two occasions—on triples by Oliver Cua and Ty Tang—before Arellano nailed the game-winning triple.

The Maroons opened the fourth period with a 9-0 blitz, capped by a Doruelo triple, that turned their narrow 58-52 lead into a 67-52 advantage.



MICHAEL Gavino of the UP Maroons gets his left arm pinned by an NU Bulldog as he battles for possession during the game yesterday. UP made every effort to flaunt its new strength in the rout of NU.
AUGUST DELA CRUZ

The varsity scores:

First Game

UP 81—Doruelo 20, David 16, Santos 12, Cruz 11, Bienvenida 6, Ferrer 4, Agbayani 4, Vainio 3, Padolina 2, Buyco 2, Quebral 1, Sorongon 0, Gavino 0, Epres 0.

NU 59—Asoro 18, Flor 11, Fernandez 6, Estolano 6, Malagueño 5, Jahnke 5, Malcontento 3, C. Catamora 3, Sanchez 2, Tungkol 0, Salvado 0, Dela Cruz 0, D. Catamora 0.

Quarters: 15-13, 37-32, 58-52, 81-59

Second Game

UE 57—Raymundo 13, Arellano 12, Custodio 11, Borboran 11, Espiritu 10, Palaganas 0, Saguindel 0, Martinez 0, Labagala 0, Gregorio 0, Cañizares 0.

LA SALLE 56—Yeo 11, Maierhoffer 8, Cabatu 8, Araña 8, Tang 7, Cua 6, Villanueva 4, Casio 2, Aquino 2, Rivera 0, Benitez 0.

Quarters: 17-10, 20-24, 34-40, 57-56

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In-form Stags take on Altas

BACK-IN-GROOVE San Sebastian Stags are hoping they've put their early troubles behind them.

"The winning attitude of the whole team is now there," said coach Turo Valenzona as his Stags vie for their third straight win against the University of Perpetual Help Altas in the NCAA men's basketball tournament at 5 p.m. today at the Cuneta Astrodome.

The San Beda Lions, meanwhile, and the Jose Rizal U Bombers shoot for their first victory at 1 p.m.

After a dismal 0-3 start, the Stags recovered with back-to-back wins against the St. Benilde Blazers and the Lions.

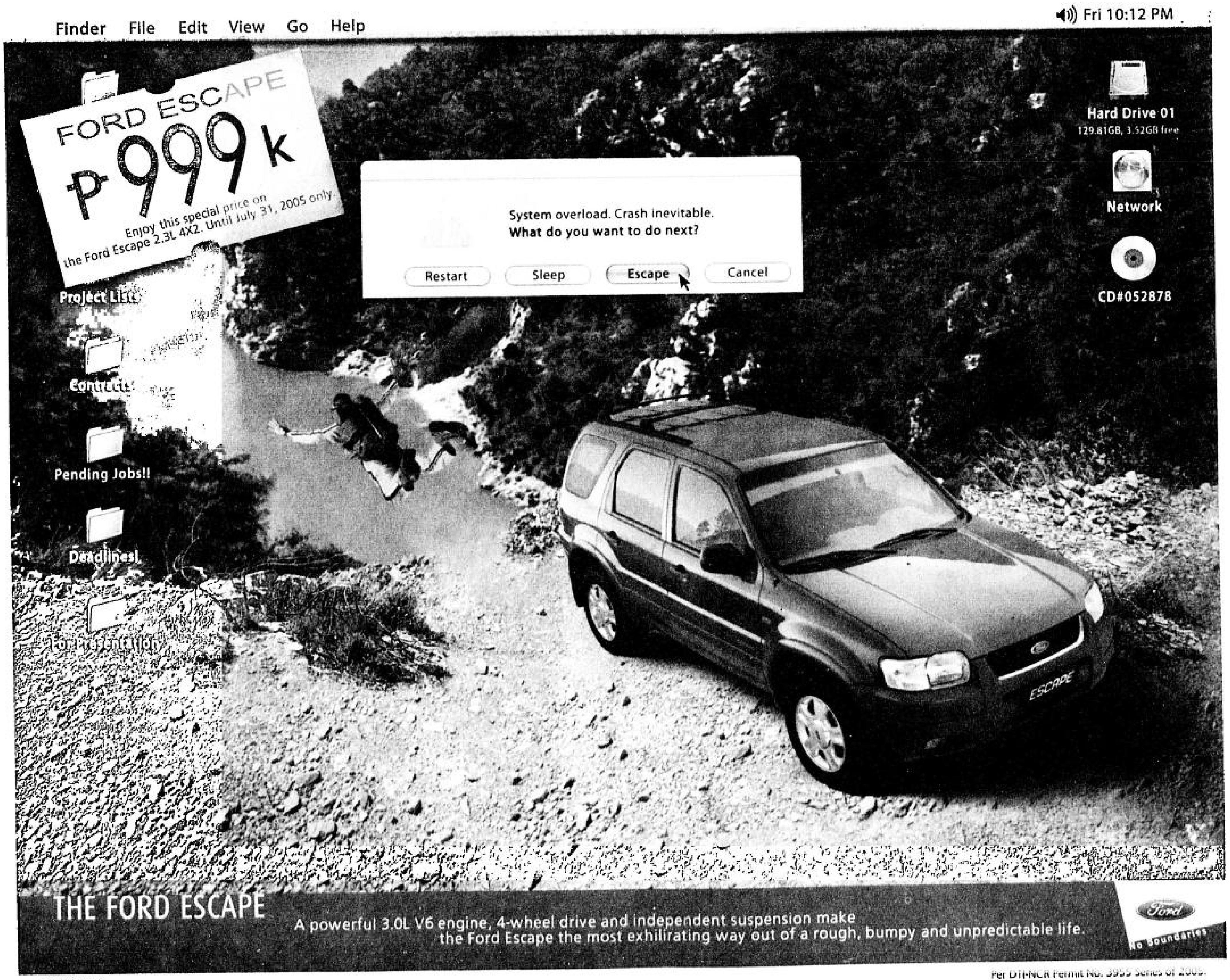
Workhorse Leo Najorda and lanky forward Red Vicente finally got help from the Stags bench in their 77-74 win against San Beda.

"Our second stringers stepped up," said Valenzona.

The 2004 runners-up Altas are also aiming for a turnaround after posting their first win against the luckless Bombers, 59-42.

"If you look at our bench, they're mostly rookies," said Perpetual coach Bai Cristobal.

Jasmine W. Payo



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Lance foils conniving foes

AX-3 DOMAINES, France—As the Pyrenean peak loomed, the assault Lance Armstrong was bracing for finally came. Here, the six-time champion knew, was a Tour de France moment of truth.

"It's scary," he admitted later.

Emotionless behind their wraparound shades, Armstrong's pink-shirted rivals from the German T-Mobile squad raced into the steep ascent at full pelt. The tactic was simple: Isolate Armstrong by riding so hard that his teammates would be unable to stay with the pace.

It worked. By the time T-Mobile's racers were spent, Armstrong's support crew were strewn down the road and his long-tormented challengers, including T-Mobile leader Jan Ullrich, finally had him were they wanted him—alone on a climb. Now, it was man-to-man.

"In that situation you either fight back or you run away," Armstrong said.

He fought, and end result was familiar: Armstrong came out on top of his main challengers in an epic stage 14, taking another step toward a seventh consecutive Tour victory.

JAN Ullrich (left) and Ivan Basso (right) try to isolate Lance Armstrong in the hopes of leaving him vulnerable to attack. The ploy failed as Armstrong punished his rivals in a steep climb and padded his overall lead. AFP

Even without his teammates who usually lead him up mountains, Armstrong fended off Ullrich, Italian Ivan Basso and others, and dealt out punishment of his own by beating them to the ski station of Ax-3 Domaines, extending his overall lead.

Armstrong placed second, 56 seconds behind Georg Totschnig, the first Austrian since 1931 to win a stage. But he is not a challenger in the overall standings.

Overall, Armstrong's lead over Basso grew to 2 minutes, 46 seconds and to 4:34 over Ullrich. Those advantages could carry Armstrong to victory in Paris on July 24.

Closest overall remains Mickael Rasmussen. But the Dane lost 63 seconds to Armstrong, placing eighth. For now, he trails Armstrong by 1:41 but that will likely grow dramatically in a time trial—Armstrong's specialty—on the Tour's penultimate day.

Armstrong's already comfortable lead over Ullrich going into the stage placed the onus on the German to try to make up time. The best hope of doing that was "to make Lance's team explode," said T-Mobile rider Alexandre Vinokourov.

T-Mobile made their move by sprinting into the toughest ascent, a 15-kilometer (9.4-mile) climb over the Port de Pailheres. It peaks at 1,969 meters (6,565 feet) and is so hard that it is classified as "hors categorie"—or unrated.

Armstrong knew he was being set up for a fall.

"It's scary when you see five kilometers before the bottom the entire team go to the front and start riding as hard as they can," Armstrong said. "You see what is going to happen, the order they are in, you see what they are setting up for, so that naturally gives you fear." *AP*

RP drubs tall Chinese team in Global Hoops

LAS VEGAS—The PBA-backed Philippine national training team beat Aoshen of China, 80-65, Saturday night (Friday morning in Manila) in the Global Hoops Summit summer league at the Cox Pavilion of the University of Nevada at Las Vegas campus arena.

It was the Philippines' first of five games in the 10-team, five-day tournament, meant to help prepare the Nationals for their quest for an Olympic stint in 2008.

Surprise late additions to the Chinese roster were a pair of 7-foot-1 cagers in Atlanta Olympian Shan Tao and Zhang Song Tao.

But the Chinese team's edge in height hardly mattered as the Philippines used a full-court press to disrupt its patterns on the way to the victory.

Next in line for the Philippines is Passing Lane Sports led by 7-8 center Sun Ming Ming of China and former Washington Wizards guard God Shammgod. The Filipinos are also scheduled to face the Long Beach Jam, starring former PBA import Damien Cantrell, BDA Sports and the Nigerian national team led by ex-PBA import Julius Nwosu.

The scores:

RP 80—Thoss 13, Cortez 13, de la Cruz 12, Allado 8, Ritualo 8, Williams 8, Alvarez 6, Helterbrand 6, Adducul 3, Yap 2, Raymundo 1, Mamaril 0.

Aoshen 65—Huang Hai Bei 21, Hou Nan 11, Zhang Song Tao 10, Shan Tao 8, Zhao Hua Nan 5, Duan Chao 4, Jin Xin 4, Li Wei 2.

Halftime: 51-34.

Try this Pinoy boxing website, it's a winner

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

MANNY Pacquiao has won his big money-and-morals bout against his former handlers, led by US promoter Murad Muhammad and business manager Rod Nazario of the Philippines.

That should be the start of something good for Philippine boxing.

Sorry, but local authorities, led by the lazy, lardy Games and Amusements Board under Eric Buhain (son-in-law of Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita), refused to lift a finger to do a follow-up probe of those who had duped Pacquiao.

The sport of boxing remains a favorite venue for exploitation by criminal elements here, with poor fighters forever the underdogs whose rights and dignity are trampled.

The bleeding (for the underpaid boxer) continues in Philippine boxing, while the whole nation suffers deeper under a distrusted regime.

* * *

We're all down on the floor, while leaders who continue to spit at truth and make mincemeat of morality continue to lord it over in our shattered land.

But, hey, there's this one good break, reports Cebu boxing expert Salven Lagumbay, at least for RP boxing, if not for the poor, suffering *masa*.

"Sir, we're launching Philboxing.com website. Please access it at www.philboxing.com/preview on Thursday," Salven offered.

That was last Thursday, July 14.

We did try the website, and we're making this report brimming with hope and excitement.

Philboxing.com is a true gift, an exception in these troubled times.

* * *

A winner, a future champ, we told Mr. Lagumbay, the bearer of good tidings.

For starters, do you know that our very own Pancho Villa, who beat Jimmy Wilde on May 18, 1923 to become the first Asian world boxing champion, was voted the greatest flyweight of the century by the Associated Press?

The Pinoy boxing website also reports that Villa was Francisco Guilledo in real life, born in Ilog, Negros Occidental, on Aug. 1, 1901. It added that Villa was only one of four Asians who have been installed in the international Boxing Hall of Fame.

And what about Little Dado, Eleuterio Zapanta who reigned as world bantam king in the early 1940s?

Small Montana was Benjamin Gan, who beat a certain Midget Wolfgast to annex the world flyweight title in September 1935. He reigned until 1937.

These ring greats, including Salvador "Dado" Marino, Flash Elorde, Roberto Cruz, Luisito Espinosa and a host of others, are paraded in the "former champs" section of boxing website.

* * *

Naturally, centerpiece of this Pinoy bonus to the boxing world is Manny Pacquiao, hottest RP sports property.

Is the Pacman headed for doom? Is there hope for a Pacquiao rematch with Erik Morales, his Mexican conqueror who's reportedly moving up one weight class?

You get the answers, provided by seasoned boxing writers from all over the world.

Subject of current interest, of course, is a thesis in progress on the ins-and-outs of Pacquiao's legal battle with handlers who had robbed him blind earlier on in his career.

This should be provided by US-based Pinoy journalist Winchell Campos, who's been privy to the workings inside Pacquiao's new management team headed by Shelley Finkel.

* * *

Well, don't sign off yet. That's only on the former champs' side of the website.

There are also win-win points on current RP champs, word-rated Pinoy fighters, national ratings, fight schedules, results, etc.

You could go through the long list of trainers, managers, promoters, boxing gyms.

Indeed a coming-out party for RP boxing, said one excited subscriber.

Yes, the menu won't be complete without mention of the lovely, luscious Pinay ring card girls.

Their pictures are there for the boxing enthusiast to admire.

If you plan to push further in that shapely direction, the inimitable Dong Secuya, maker of the world-renowned mannypacquiao.ph, and Salven Lagumbay have vowed to guide you even in hot, non-sporting interests.

They promise to provide available cellphone numbers of these great boxing muses.

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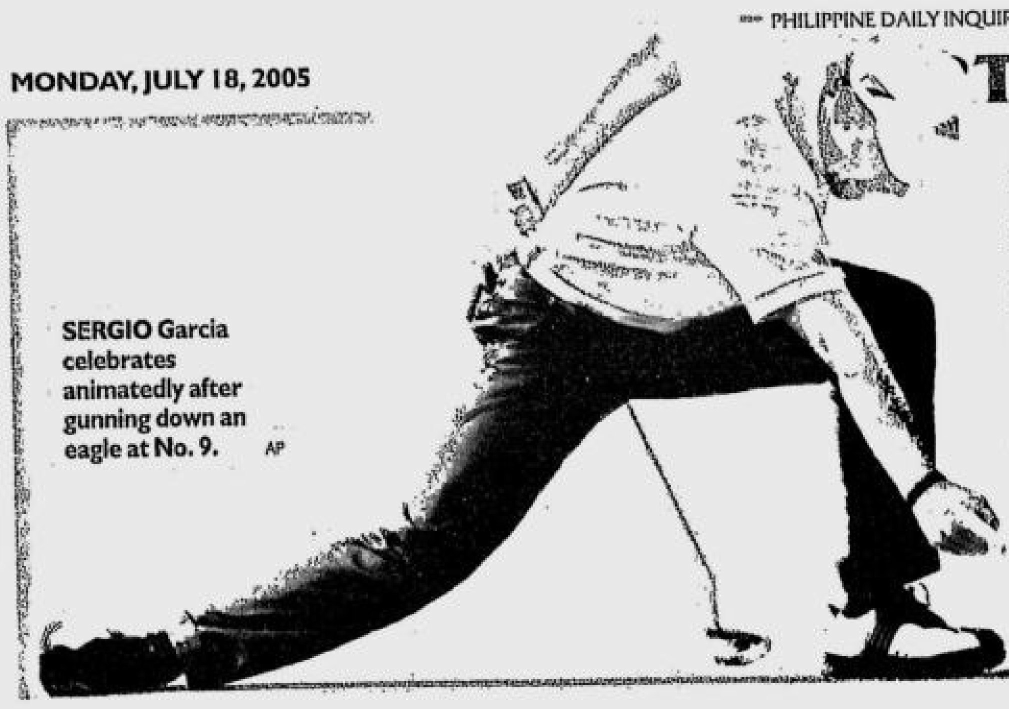

SERGIO Garcia celebrates animatedly after gunning down an eagle at No. 9. AP

BRITISH OPEN

Tiger tumbles but keeps lead

ST. ANDREWS, Scotland—Tiger Woods hit the ball so hard that he felt the shaft in his putter flex ever so slightly. Standing 50 paces away on the 18th green, his caddie removed the flag, backed away from the cup, then turned and raised his fist in a rare celebration Saturday at the British Open.

The ball stopped inches away for a birdie that allowed Woods to break par.

Better yet, it gave him a two-shot lead going into the final round, a position that looked to be in doubt during a surprising struggle at windswept St. Andrews.

"I'm very happy to be in the lead," Woods said. "The conditions got a little bit difficult today. To have the lead all day, and actually end up with the lead, it's pretty sweet."

A pivotal par save on the Road Hole, followed by his tap-in birdie on the 18th, gave Woods a 1-under 71 and left him two shots clear of Jose Maria Olazabal.

But on a day when the cheers were for everyone else—Woods even heard some throaty booing while paired with Scottish hero Colin Montgomerie—he brought an elite list of players back into the picture.

Olazabal, a two-time Masters champion, holed a 15-foot birdie on the 18th for a 68.

Two-time US Open champion Retief Goosen went out early before the wind arrived and shot 66, leaving him three shots behind with Montgomerie (70). Another shot back was Sergio Garcia (69) and Brad Faxon (70), the favorite American tourist at St. Andrews after coming over to qualify.

US Open champion Michael Campbell (68) and three-time major winner Vijay Singh (71) are both lurking five shots out of the lead.

"The game's on a little bit now," Goosen said.

Woods failed to turn this into a runaway, as he did five years ago at St. Andrews when he built a six-shot lead going into the last day. For most of the afternoon, he was a model of futility.

But he didn't lose his grip on his bid for a 10th major. Woods was at 12-under 204, and the numbers that mean just as much are his 31-3 record when he has at least a share of the 54-hole lead, including a 9-0 mark in the majors.

WOODS reacts after a par on the tough No. 17.

"I know, as well as everyone else knows in this field, that Tiger has probably had his hiccup today," Montgomerie said. "And he got around under par."

Asked the last time he beat Woods head-to-head in a major, Montgomerie replied with a smirk, "Not many have."

"I don't think I have, no," he said. "If you have 150 players up here, they'll give you the same answer." *AP*

Taylor snaps Hopkins title bout winning run

LAS VEGAS—Jermain Taylor ended Bernard Hopkins' record middleweight title winning streak with a split decision Saturday.

Hopkins had won 20 consecutive defenses, but he started slowly and only got to Taylor late in the fight. By then, the undefeated challenger had built up a big enough lead on two judges' scorecards to take the crown.

Taylor, 26, has won all 24 of his pro fights. There was concern, though, that he couldn't handle the seasoned Hopkins, considered as good as any boxer in the sport today

Early on, though, Taylor dominated. By the time Hopkins took charge, it was too late.

"He never hurt me," Taylor said. "He got some good punches in, but he never hurt me."

It was the first loss for the 40-year-old Hopkins since Roy Jones defeated him 12 years ago.

Judge Jerry Roth scored the fight 116-112 for Hopkins, but judges Duane Ford and Paul Smith both had it 115-113 for Taylor.

"It felt great, I felt like crying," Taylor said of the decision.

The AP scored it 114-113 for Hopkins.

"This is a situation where I won and they gave it to the other guy," Hopkins said.

Hopkins, now 46-3-1, did almost nothing in the first two rounds, and the pro-Taylor crowd ate it up. With many in the crowd of 11,992 at the MGM Grand making the trip from Arkansas—Taylor wore red trunks with Arkansas written across the back—the fans had lots to cheer about.

JERMAIN Taylor shows off his belts after defeating Bernard Hopkins at the MGM Grand. REUTERS

But the chants of "JT, JT" stopped in the fourth when the action slowed, and in the fifth Taylor was cut on the top left side of his head by an accidental butt. It bled for much of the remaining rounds and seemed to slow Taylor for a while.

"I was wasting a lot of energy chasing him around when I should have cut off the ring," Taylor admitted. *AP*

PBA: Mad scramble for free agents seen

By June Navarro

MORE than half of the players in the Philippine Basketball Association have expiring contracts within the year, potentially adding up to the growing list of free agents that teams might want to scramble for.

Of the 74 players who saw action in the just-concluded Gran Matador Fiesta Conference, 42 already have expired contracts, eight have pacts expiring before the start of the new season, while 25 more have contracts that will expire at year's end.

San Miguel Beer's Danny Seigle, Anton Villoria, Francis Adriano, Ginebra's Rodney Santos and Andy Seigle, Red Bull's Jimwell Torion and Coca-Cola's Poch Juinio have contracts that recently expired.

Coca-Cola's Rafi Reavis and William Antonio, Peter June Simon and Richard Yee of Purefoods and FedEx's Gary David have existing contacts until the end of September.

By the end of the year, Alaska's Brandon Cablay and Mike Cortez, San Miguel Beer's Olsen Racela, Red Bull's Junthy Valenzuela and Lordy Tugade, Jimmy Alapag of Talk 'N Text, Sta. Lucia's Marlou Aquino and Paolo Mendoza are expected to secure fresh pacts with their teams.

Other players with pacts expiring on New Year's eve are Ginebra's Sunday Salvacion, Noy Castillo of Purefoods, Red Bull's Cyrus Baguio, Harvey Carey of Talk 'N Text, Shell's

PBA/ A28

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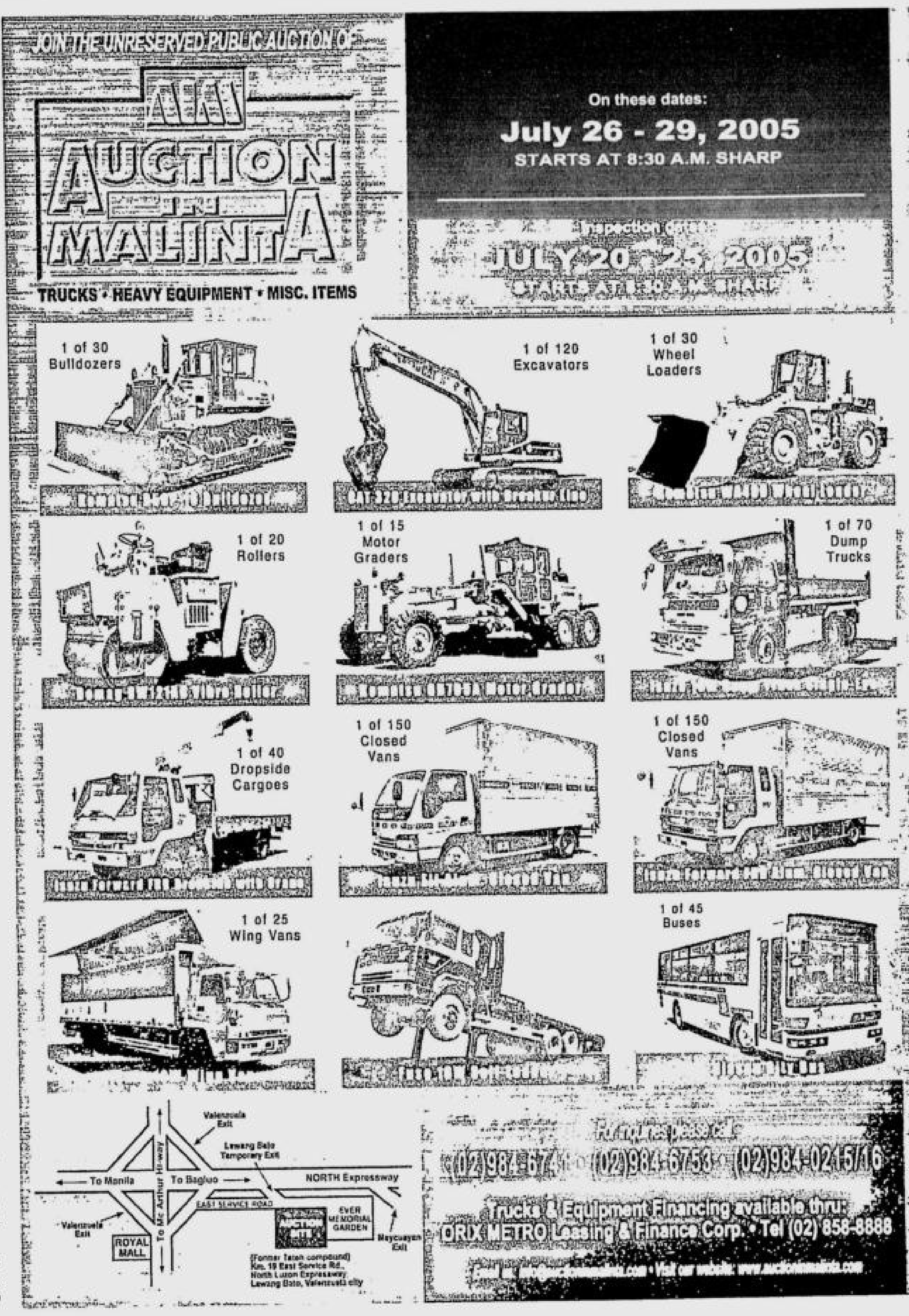

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MAKATI MAINER

Gorres vs Thai reset to July 30

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

Z "THE DREAM" Gorres' highly-anticipated OPBF eliminator against Thai Deeden Kengkarun will now take place on July 30 at the Makati Coliseum in Makati City.

Gorres, the top Orient Pacific Boxing Federation superflyweight, faces a tough test before his planned crack at the OPBF diadem as he goes up against Thai toughie Kengkarun, the former PABA junior flyweight champ.

The event, to be covered by Viva Sports, will feature Gorres before he takes on the winner of the upcoming Masayuki Arinaga-Daisuke Maruyama fight.

OPBF president Frank Quill had earlier installed Gorres as the OPBF's mandatory challenger in the latest rankings released by the WBC-sanctioned regional group.

Gorres, the sweet-punching former amateur standout who recently underwent training under renowned tactician Buddy McGirt in Orlando, Florida, is preparing for his upcoming fight at the famed ALA Gym in Talamban, Cebu.

The talented southpaw, who is managed by eminent lawyer Rudy Salud and Cebuano sportsman Tony Aldeguer, last saw action on March 19, when he easily defeated Glenn Donaire in the first round. The fight was in the undercard of the Erik Morales-Manny Pacquiao tiff. He has been undefeated in eight fights since his shock defeat at the hands of Edgar Rodrigo in 2003.

The stocky Kengkarun, a native of Chumporn, Thailand, is a dangerous 33-fight veteran (21-10-2, 12 KO's).

PBA: Mad scramble

From page A27

Ronald Tubid, Roger Yap, Chris Calaguio and Billy Mamaril;

Stephen Padilla (ALA), Erick Canlas (SMB), Mike Hrabak (PF), Eddie Laure (PF), Topex Robinson (RB), Adonis Sta. Maria (SHL), Jun Marzan (SHL) and Bong Ravena (TNT).

Players free to negotiate their expired contracts: Jerry Codiñera, Aris Dimaunahan, Marlon Legaspi, Bal David, Banjo Calpito, Bryan Gahol, Joey Mente, Eugene Tejada, Rob Duat, Bong Hawkins, Leo Avenido, Niño Gelig, Kalani Ferreria, Rensy Bajar, Carlo Sharma, Dennis Madrid, Bernzon Franco, Allan Salansang, Egay Echavez, Rysal Castro, Marlon Basco, Tony Boy Espinosa, Noli Locsin, Estong Ballesteros, Rob Johnson, Joseph Gumatay, James Wallkvist, Celino Cruz, Arnold Gamboa, Gilbert Malabanan, Gilbert Demape, Jek Chia, Gilbert Lao, Manny Ramos, Ryan Bernardo and Don Camaso.

BF halts Manda netters...

From page A32

joy the homecourt advantage.

The results:

PCA d. EUSEBIO, 6-1—R. Caniza/J. Sanchez def. E. Romero/L. Santos 8-1, A. Geluz/M. Tan lost to B. Gregorio/R. Tolentino 4-8. R. Kraut/M. Balce def. J. De Castro/J. Sanbuenaventura 8-5, B. Santos/F. Gomez def. R. Canlas/O. Gandionco 8-5, I. Santos/R. Barte def. M. Estrada/J. Mejia 8-0, E. Reyes/C. Francisco def. N. Noguera/V. Berame 8-3, B. So/J. Soriano def. H. Romaguera/B. Aguila 8-6.

VALLE VERDE d. CAPITOL, 4-3—G. Bautista/G. Abacan def. D. Guinto/J. Silverio 8-0, R. Villanueva/K. Santamaria lost to G. Gatchalian/J. Benitez 7-8, R. Orsolino/R. Felix def. C. Hiwatig/M. Neri 8-6, J. Reyes/J. Villanueva def. J. Fernandez/W. Erap 8-3, E. Erum/B. Manago def. R. Fabella/B. Bagaltos 8-3, D. Fernandez/D. Halili lost to M. Veloso/D. De Jesus 3-8, I. Ibanez/S. Ong lost to R. Neri/C. Alo 4-8.

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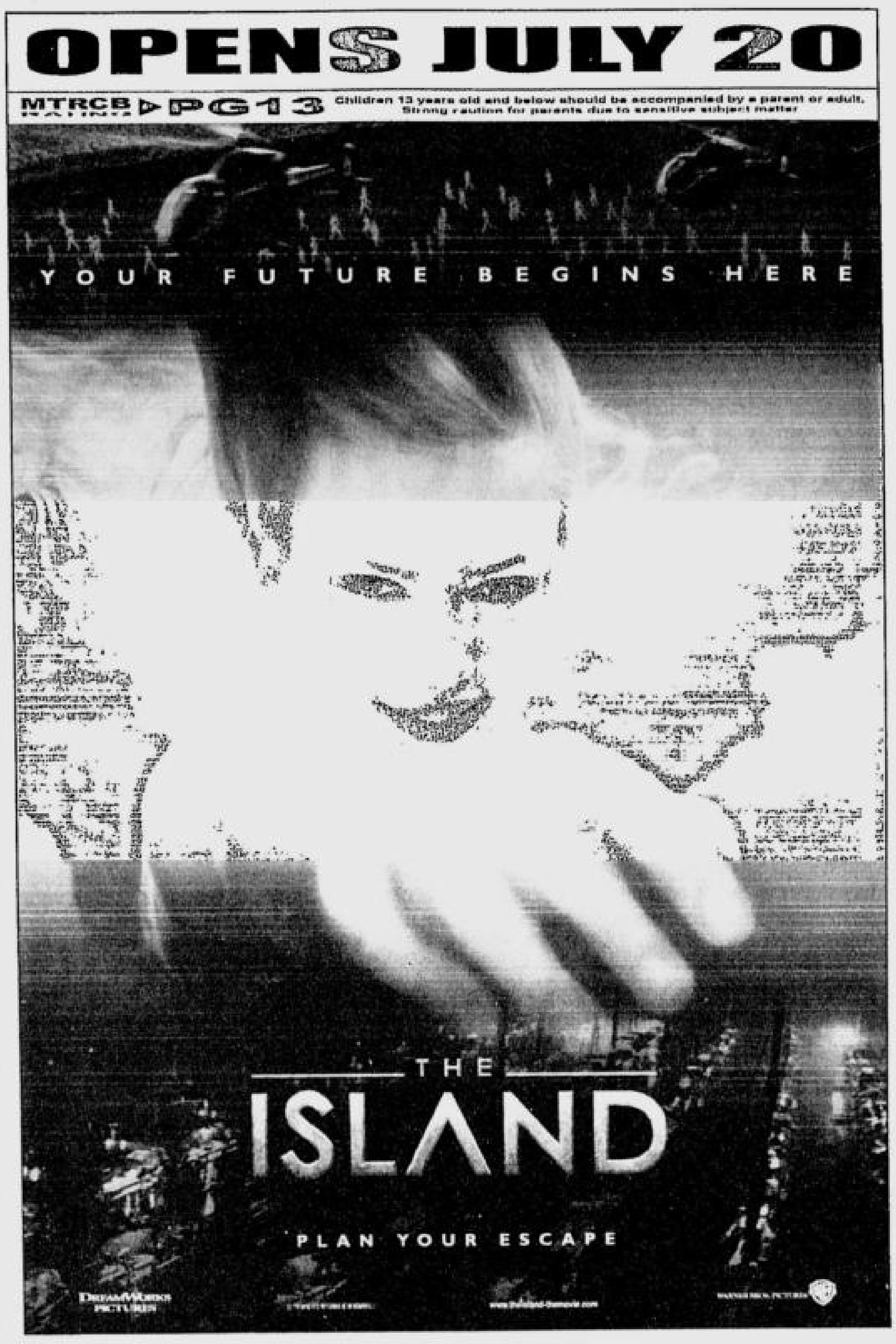
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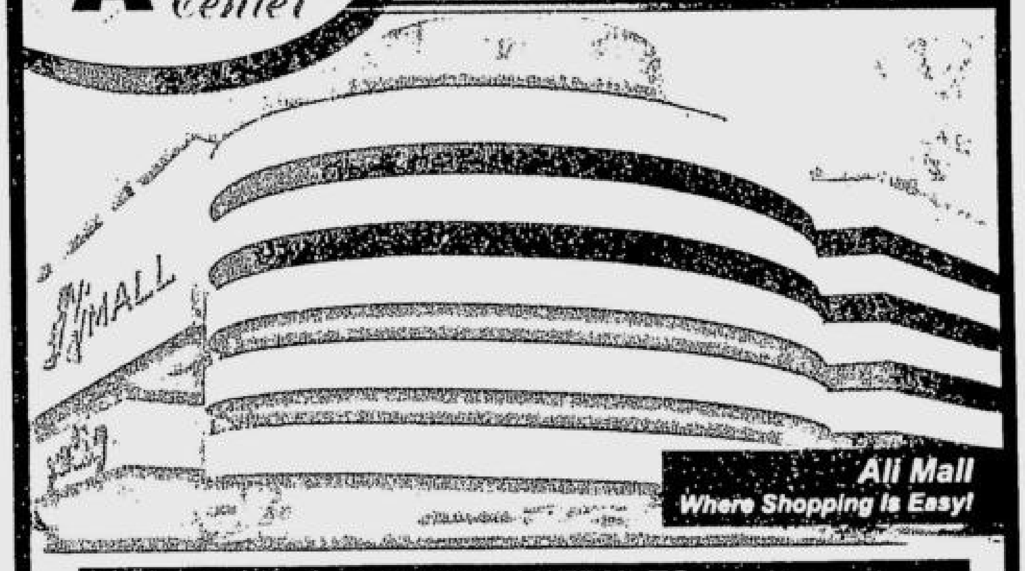
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Taiwanese cue masters on top of world

(CUELLO INTERMENT. The remains of Maribel E. Cuello, who died of a stroke on July 6 at the Anaheim Memorial Hospital in California, are at the family residence in San Pablo City. Interment will be on Friday morning, July 22, at the San Gabriel Memorial Park in the city. Maribel is survived by brother Jun Cuello, sister Fely Maglanoc, nephews and niece Manu Iñigo and his wife Zes Cuello, PJ and Con Cuello, Bernard Maglanoc and granddaughter Maizel Iñigo).

* * *

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

I HESITATE to point out the obvious, but the all-Taiwanese finals in the recent 2005 World Pool Championship in Kaohsiung, Taiwan, is a sign that Chinese Taipei players are now the most dominant force in international billiards.

Word of their skills had preceded them many months earlier. Philippine billiards "godfather" Aristeo "Putch" Puyat said of them: "Players from Chinese Taipei will be the biggest threat in world pool, particularly boy wonder Wu Chia-ching, the 16-year-old prodigy from Taishang county of Taipei."

Gifted with a booming break and obsessed with winning, Wu never lost his cool in eking out a nail-biting 17-16 victory over 27-year-old compatriot Kuo Po-cheng in this year's World Pool Championship match to become the youngest world champion at age 16.

And with its vast reservoir of pool talents, Taiwan could very well mark the beginning of a new dynasty in international billiards. It could also bank on battle-tested Chao Fong-pang, the first Asian to win the World Pool Championship twice (in 1993 and 2000); 2005 San Miguel Beer Asian 9-Ball Tour top finisher Yang Ching-sun, who won the third leg of the Tour in his hometown, Kaohsiung; and Chang Pei-wei, last year's losing finalist to Alex Pagulayan in the World Pool Championship.

"These Chinese Taipei players are dynamic shooters and masters of the jump shots," stressed Puyat, the country's leading billiards benefactor.

In this year's World Pool Championship, Mandaluyong City's Marlon Manalo, sponsored by Puyat Sports and Solar Sports, was the best-placed Filipino by advancing to the semifinals where he lost to Wu.

Seven other Filipinos advanced to the knockout round, namely, last year's champion Alex Pagulayan, Rodolfo Luat, former world No. 1 Francisco "Django" Bustamante, Asian Tour leg winners Ronnie Alcano and Gandy Valle, Dennis Orcollo and Warren Kiamco.

However, former World Pool champion Efren "Bata" Reyes and Antonio "Nikoy" Lining did not make it, losing in the group elimination matches.

At 51, Reyes has shown signs of slowing. He himself has admitted that he's slowly beginning to feel his age. Still, he didn't want to be counted out.

"I'm not yet a wash-up. I think I'm good for some more years," stressed Reyes, who once emerged as the most admired Filipino athlete in a nationwide survey conducted by the Social Weather Stations, receiving the votes of 33 percent of 1,200 respondents.

By the way, Reyes was already 45 years old when he won the World Pool title in 1999, while Bustamante was well past 30 when he became the world's No. 1 player in 1998.

During the 1970s and '80s, the Americans were the most dominant force in world billiards. Among their top players were Nick Varner, Mike Lebron, Jay Helfert, Jimmy Rempe, Kim Davenport, Buddy Hall and, much later (in the 1990s and 2000s), Earl Strickland, Johnny Archer, Corey Deuel and Rodney Morris.

In the 1980s, Asian cue artists started to make their presence felt. In 1984, Jose "Amang" Parica started the Filipino invasion of the United States where he defeated leading American players.

Reyes followed suit and, playing under the name Cesar Morales, built a reputation that would swell to its present status—the most dangerous and finest player on the planet.

Then in 1993, Chao Fong-pang of Chinese Taipei won the World Pool Championship, with Japan's Takeshi Okumura becoming the next champ in 1994, the same year Reyes topped the prestigious US Open 9-Ball tournament. In 1997, Parica ruled the US circuit while Bustamante became the undisputed king in 1998, winning the eight-leg Camel Pro series and pocketing a whopping total prize of P5 million.

Reyes emerged World Pool champ in 1999, with Chao repeating in 2000. Mika Immonen of Finland won in 2001, Strickland in 2002 and Thorsten Hohmann of Germany in 2003. Pagulayan gave the Philippines the world championship in 2004.

In my opinion, this present crop of Asian players can be very powerful, a force to reckon with in the years to come.

PCC anniversary derby today

A CASH pot of P2 million awaits the winners in the Pasay City Cockpit's 19th PCC Anniversary 5-Cock Derby which kicks off at 3 p.m. today with its first-round eliminations. The 75-fight program is sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Pit manager Eric dela Rosa said participants will get their traditional anniversary gifts. Paying patrons will also get giveaways. Two pointers in the eliminations will get P15,000 while the champions on July 22 will pocket P1 million each. Participants with three straight wins (fight numbers 1, 2 and 3) will share in the P100,000 prize; fight numbers 2, 3 and 4, P100,000, and fight numbers 3, 4 and 5, P100,000. Meanwhile, the ASF entry of Allan Siaco topped the 330 K Big Event 6-Cock Derby last Friday, after posting five wins and one loss. For inquiries, call 8431890, 8431746 or 8166750.

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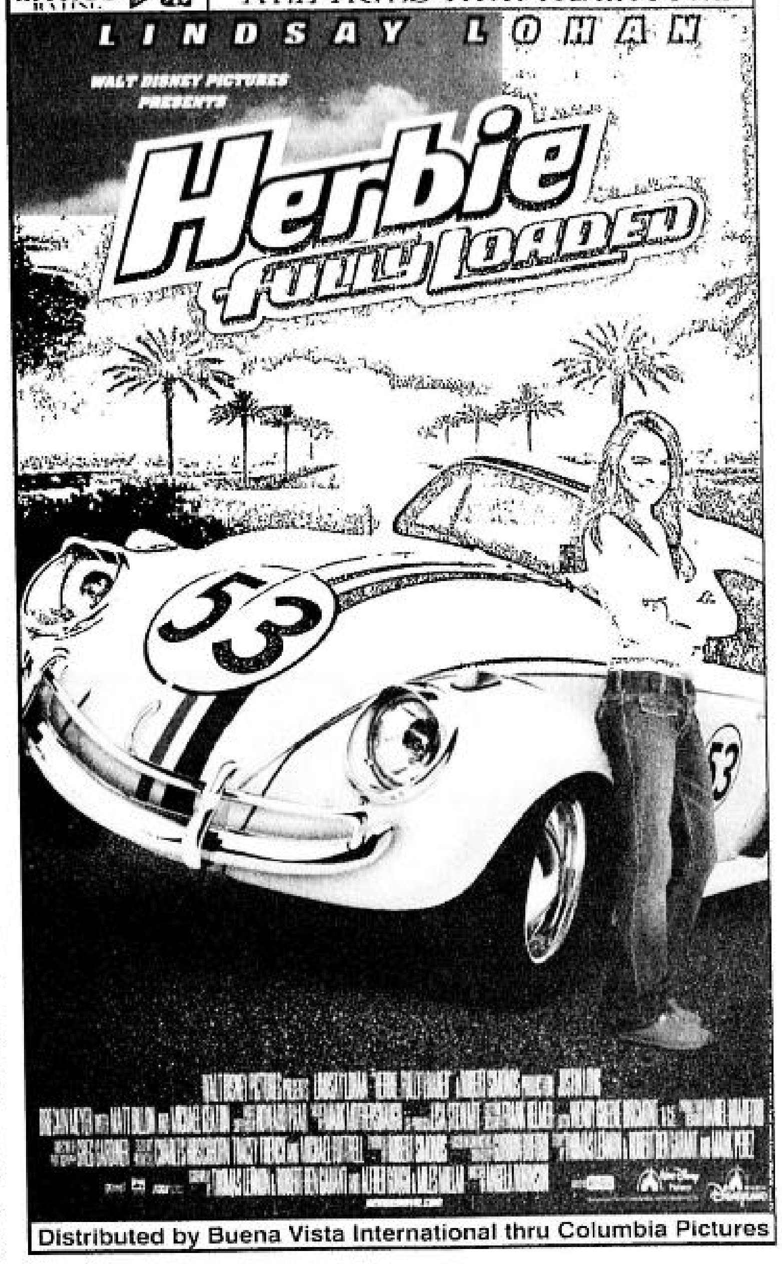

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2 FANTASTIC FOUR 12:20, 3:00, 5:40 8:20, 11:00 GP
3 HERBIE FULLY LOADED 10:30, 12:55, 3:25 5:55, 8:25, 10:50 PG-13
4 FANTASTIC FOUR 11:40, 2:20, 5:00 7:40, 10:20 GP

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HERBIE: FULLY LOADED GP 12:55,3:15,5:35, 7:55,10:15
IF ONLY PG13 1:45,3 55,6:05, 8:15,10 25
FANTASTIC FOUR GP 11:50,2 10,4:30, 6:50,9:10
WAR OF THE WORLDS PG13 12:00,2 30,5 00, 7:30,10:00
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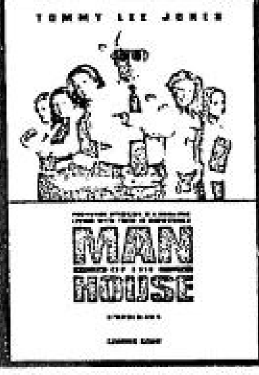

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CREEP
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NEW POLICE STORY
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PINOY BLONDE
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS
SIN CITY
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1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00

2 FANTASTIC FOUR
12:30 2:45 5:00 7:15 9:30

3 PINOY BLONDE
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

4 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

5 NEW POLICE STORY
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

6 IF ONLY
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

7 SHANGHAI LILY
12:30 2:20 4:10 6:00 7:50 9:40

8 CAMPUS GHOST STORIES
2:45 5:15 7:45 10:00

9 MONSTER-IN-LAW
12:25 2:50 5:15 7:40 10:00

10 WAR OF THE WORLDS
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 FANTASTIC FOUR
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

2 CAMPUS GHOST STORIES
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

3 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

4 PINOY BLONDE
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

5 IF ONLY
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

6 WAR OF THE WORLDS
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

7 NEW POLICE STORY
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193/682-8199

1 IF ONLY
2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

2 NEW POLICE STORY
1:05 3:45 6:25 9:05

3 CAMPUS GHOST STORIES
12:05 2:15 4:25 6:35 9:00

4 WAR OF THE WORLDS
12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00

5 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
1:40 4:10 6:40 9:10

6 FANTASTIC FOUR
3:00 5:20 7:40

7 FANTASTIC FOUR
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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 HERBIE FULLY LOADED	2 FANTASTIC 4	3 THX FANTASTIC 4 2:00, 4:30, 7:00,9:30 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	4 MONSTER-IN-LAW	5 THE NEW POLICE STORY	6 IF ONLY	7 WAR OF THE WORLDS	
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 HERBIE FULLY LOADED 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30,9:50	2 FANTASTIC 4 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40			
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX FANTASTIC 4 3:20, 5:40,8:00,10:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX IF ONLY 1:05, 3:10, 5:15, 7:20, 9:25, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS			
	3 FANTASTIC 4 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 WAR OF THE WORLDS 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 HERBIE FULLY LOADED 1:50, 4:10, 6:30,8:50, 11:10 GUARANTEED SEATS		
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Iloilo Warriors slay Baguio Lions in NBC

BAGUIO CITY—The visiting Iloilo Warriors led from start to finish to beat the Texas Instruments/ Beneco Baguio Lions, 91-86, Saturday in the 2005 Panasonic-NBC national basketball championship at the UB gym here.

The Warriors of IBL president Robert Uy and strong supporter Gov. Niel Tupas leaned on sophomore slotman Paul Poral's career-high 21 points and rookie Ruel Balgos' steady performance to post their second win in eight games in the Southern Conference.

The Lions rallied in the payoff period to come within five, 81-86, with 1:43 left after trailing by 14 (59-73), but Iloilo's rookie guard Tom Arceno scored four straight points to douse cold water on Baguio's comeback.

"It feels good to win again after a long, long time," said Iloilo coach John Trompeta. "Paul (Poral) and Ruel (Balgos) played big for us tonight."

The Lions of Vice Mayor Reinaldo Bautista Jr. dropped to 1-5 in the Northern Conference of the tournament supported by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Spring Cooking Oil, Accel, Molten, Nature's Spring, Far Eastern Insurance, Skygo Motorcycles, Sirlitz Solutions Provider, Hapee Toothpaste, Dewfoam, KSK Food Products (Boy Bawang), Bayview Park Hotel and Holiday Plaza-Cebu.

Eduardo Allado Jr. tallied 13 points to give the Warriors a 50-37 lead at turn. He finished with 16, including four triples, to back up the big games of Balgos and Poral.

Ozamiz Cotta is on top of the Southern Conference at 7-2, followed by defending champion Tribu Sugbu (6-2), Mantawi (4-2), Iligan and Valencia (3-4 each), CdO Stars (1-3), Iloilo and Zanorte (0-7).

Forward Taguig leads the Northern Conference at 6-0, followed by Cavite (6-5), Laguna Spring (3-2), Parañaque (3-3) and Baguio (1-5).

The scores:

ILOILO 91—Poral 21, Balgos 18, Allado 16, Arceno 9, Senierez 7, Leonida 6, Pisuena 5, Manuel 5, Sencil 4.

BAGUIO 86—Bona 21, Fontanilla 17, Mapanao 13, Duay 9, Giron 8, J. Balares 4, E. Balares 3, Carino 3, Layug 2, Tiongson 2, Ton 2, Collado 2, Castillo 2

Quarters: 22-18, 50-37, 70-59, 91-86

Argentines eliminate Aussies

SYDNEY, Australia—David Nalbandian picked a fine time to end a career winless streak against Lleyton Hewitt, and most of Argentina would agree.

Nalbandian won his third match of the World Group quarterfinal, easily beating an error-prone Hewitt, 6-2, 6-4, 6-4, Sunday to keep the South American country in the hunt for its first Davis Cup title.

Nalbandian, who lost to Hewitt in the 2002 Wimbledon final when the Argentinian was a much less accomplished player on grass, used a combination of deft backhand drop shots and stinging forehands that touched the lines to overpower Hewitt. *AP*

Tierro puts RP Cuppers on even terms with Lebanon

JOHN Patrick Tierro roared back from two sets down to outlast Patrick Chucri, 6-7 (5), 6-7 (8), 6-1, 6-4, 7-5, on Sunday as the Philippines sent its Davis Cup Asia-Oceania Group II tie with Lebanon to a decisive fifth match at the Golf Club of Lebanon clay courts in Beirut.

The Lebanese took a 2-1 edge after the pivotal doubles on Saturday when Chucri teamed up with Karim Alayli to overcome the veteran tandem of Filipino No. 2 Johnny Arcilla and Adelo Abadia, 2-6, 6-3, 4-6, 6-4, 6-4, in the tightly-fought tie's second of three five-setters thus far.

The two countries split the first two singles on Friday with Chucri whipping Arcilla, 6-2, 6-2, 6-2, and the 6-foot-1 Tierro preventing the Filipinos from sinking into a deep hole with a pulsating 6-3, 3-6, 4-6, 6-1, 7-5 victory over Lebanese No. 2 Karim Alayli.

The decisive final match between Arcilla and Alayli was being played at press time last night.

Tierro, son of a retired US Navy sailor from Olongapo City, trains at the Subic Bay International Tennis Center under Virgilio "Beeyong" Sison, the only Filipino netter to have seen action in all the Grand Slams—Australian, French, Wimbledon, US Open—during the 1980s.

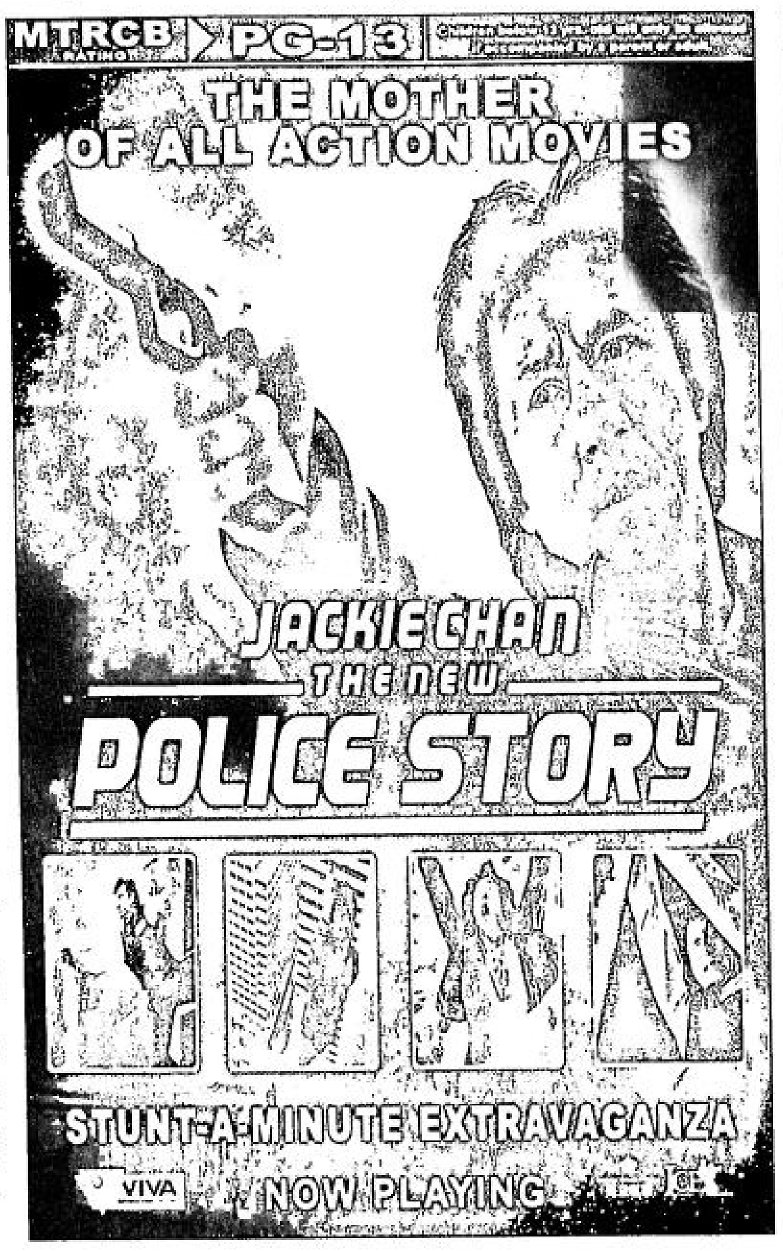
HK five relegates FedEx to battle for 3rd

HONG KONG—PBA squad FedEx absorbed its second straight loss at the hands of defending champion Hong Kong, 75-87, Saturday and missed the finals of the 14th Eastcolight Super Kung Sheung Cup invitational basketball tourney at the Queen Elizabeth Stadium here.

The Express lapsed into early foul trouble and failed to stop 7-1 Sung Fong in the shaded lane. Fong finished with 22 points.

The Filipinos settled for the battle for third place last night with newly crowned Seaba champion Malaysia.

FedEx-RP coach Johny Tam Tam noted the big discrepancy in fouls called—25 on Filipinos against 11 on Hong Kong players.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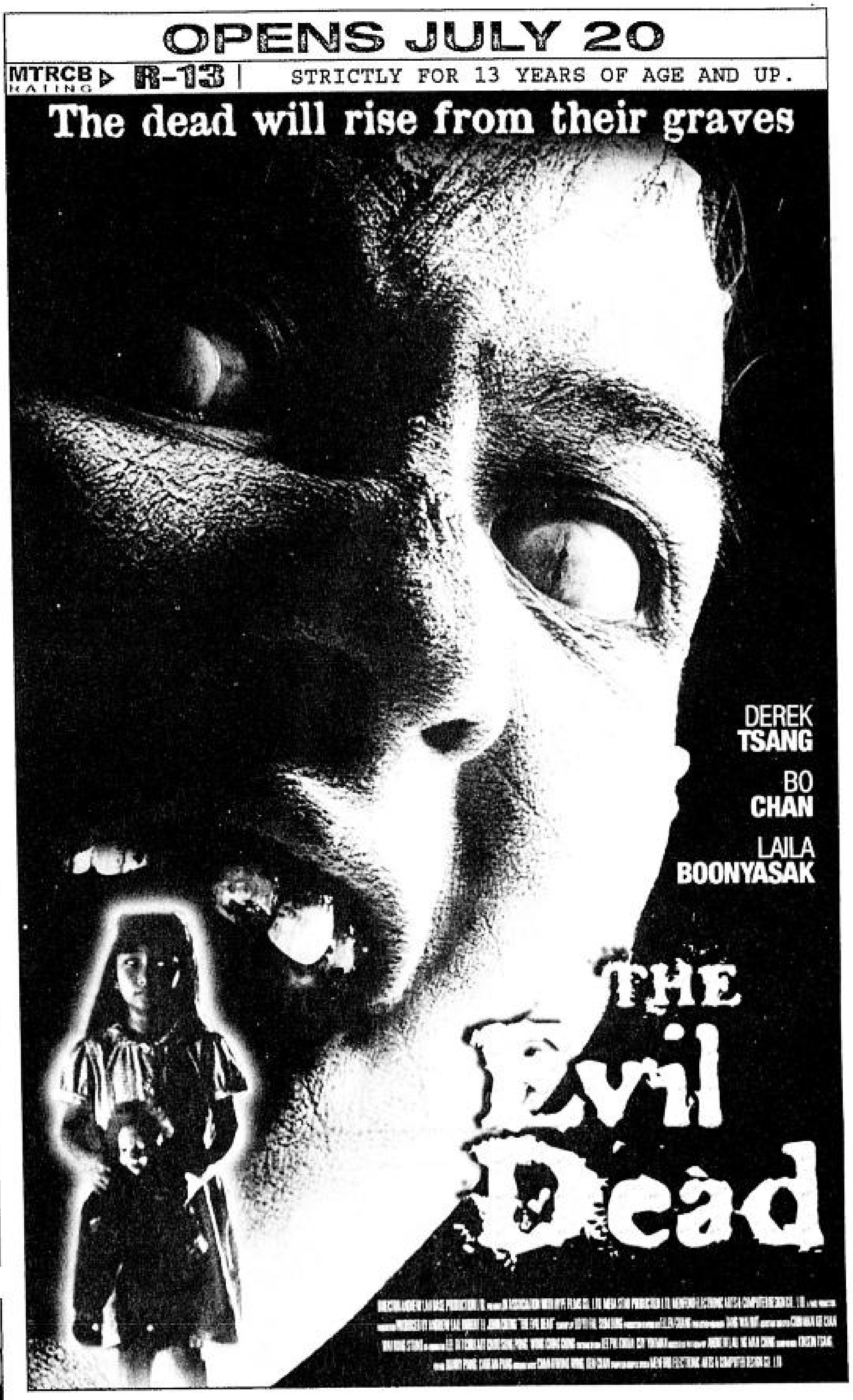
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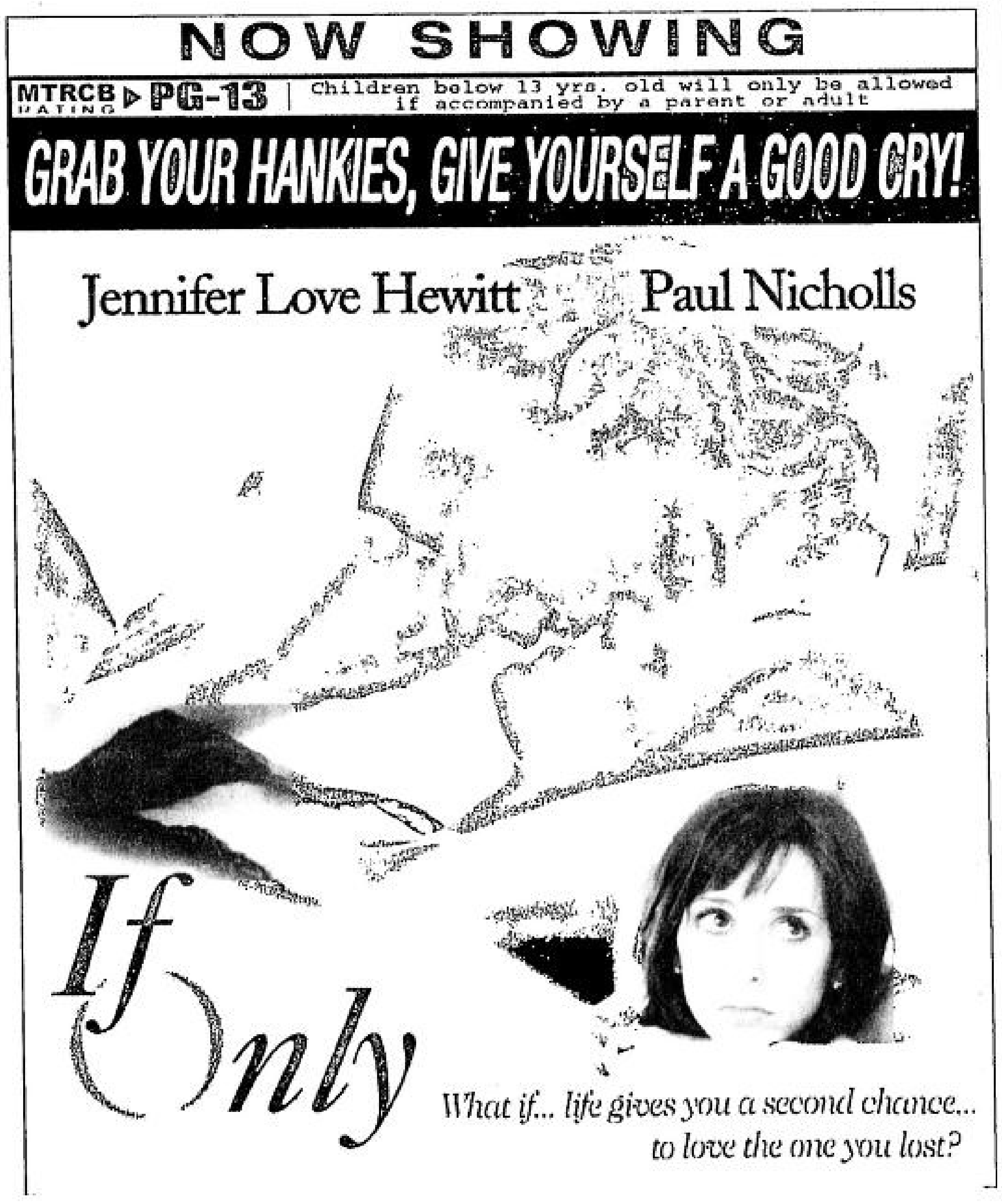
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THIS SEMESTER, SOME ANGRY SOULS ARE ALSO ENROLLED...PAPASOK KA BA SA HAUNTED SCHOOL?

SPORTS

BF netters halt Mandaluyong in home-and-away tilt

BF TENNIS Club stunned erstwhile leader Mandaluyong Tennis Club, 5-2, at home last weekend at the start of the second round of the first Prince Home and Away Interclub Team Tennis tournament.

BF completed a sweep by carving out a 4-3 away win over Eusebio Tennis Club in Pasig to snatch the crucial fourth slot among the six participating clubs.

Mandaluyong's defeat followed its 6-1 victory over Valle Verde Country Club in its last outing.

Valle Verde bounced back with a 4-3 win over Capitol Tennis Club to remain in a tie for second place with Mandaluyong.

Philippine Columbian Association (PCA) bounced back from last weekend's surprise loss at Valle Verde with big victories at home over Capitol, 7-0, and Eusebio, 6-1, to remain on top of the eight-team field with a 6-1 record.

Matches in this event supported by Nassau tennis balls, Toby's Sports and Yellow Cab resume with all teams gunning for the top 4 slots for the crossover semifinal round. The top two teams en-

BF/ A28

Team	W	L	Qnt
PCA	6	1	37-12
Manda	5	2	30-19
V. Verde	5	2	26-23
BF	4	3	27-22
Eusebio	1	6	16-33
Capitol	0	7	11-38

FCBDL CHAMPS: Members of the Hobe Bihon squad celebrate with playing-team owner Bobby Co (holding the trophy, standing sixth from left) after beating JL Audio for the Filipino Chinese Basketball Development League crown at the FEU Gym recently. The rest of the team are (from left, seated) Jerry Ong, Albert Labordo, Son Son Yeh, Jerry Tsai and Kenny Co Yu Kang, and (standing, same order) Maverick Chua, Arvin Aguila, Jerry Tan, Alvin Alonzo, Paul Boo, Terry So, coach Howard Uy and Jeffrey Ang.

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Sabal, Tolentino top Lipa Milo qualifying

LIPA CITY—Cresenciano Sabal claimed his second straight regional title even as Ellen Tolentino savored her first victory yesterday in the 29th National Milo Marathon elimination leg here.

Sabal, who placed third in the 42-K National Finals last year, found little resistance in ruling the 21-K qualifying run.

"*Mas nakakapagod manalo dahil wala akong ka*-pacing (It's more tiring to win because no one paced me)," said the 27-year-old Sabal, an Army enlisted man based in Tanay, who finished the race in one hour, 11 minutes and 47 seconds.

SABAL

Sabal, along with second placer Jonas Bacnagan of the Air Force (1:15:41) and third placer Bernardo Desamito (1:16:55), made it to the National Finals slated in Metro Manila on Oct. 9.

Tolentino ruled the women's race with a time of 1:34:40, safely in front of second placer Sealand Agana (1:36:32), the 18-year-old who already owns three full marathon titles.

Joining them in the National Finals of the annual race held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel, adidas, Cebu Pacific, Smart Kid, Department of Tourism, Addict Mobile Prepaid and Power Bar is Irma Calabia, also 18, who timed 1:40:14.

Reynaldo de los Reyes beat Sabal by a mere second to claim second place behind champion Roy Vence and the P50,000 cash prize in last year's National Finals. Sabal settled for the P30,000 third prize.

Alquin Bolivar, who used to rule 5-K races in Cagayan de Oro, topped the 5-K run in 14:43. Joseph Mancera settled for second place in 15:20 with Frankie Trinidad third in 15:24.

Jazmin Piores (20:08), Cheryl Tolentino (21:12) and April Guillen (22:20) finished in that order in the women's 5K.

Winners in the 3-K Kiddies races were James Lobo and Ailene Cator in the 6-9 age category and Rico Lacquio and Janice Lanto in the 10-12 class.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Monday, July 18, 2005

HOLLYWOOD DREAM
Hosted by Eric Quizon

THE DREAM BEGINS JULY 17! The much-talked - about reality show "Hollywood Dream" will finally begin! Find out who will get a chance to fly to New York and Los Angeles, meet Hollywood producers and casting directors, get a Screen Actors Guild card, appear on "As the World Turns" and land a role in 2 movies being produced in Hollywood!

SUNDAY 9:00 PM

ABC

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
NBN					Teledyaryo	New Life TV Shopping		Concert at the Park		Family Rosary Crusade		Teledyaryo		Network Forum		Dial M			
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Pasion de Amor	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Opids	Meteor Garden Season 2	TV Patrol World	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Ikaw Ang Lahat Sa Akin	Kampanerang Kuba	Green Rose	Oh! Feel Young	OK Fine! Whatever			Insider
ABC 5					Batas Barangay		TNA Impact		Sentro	Friends	The Apprentice		Fear Factor		Big News	Look Who's Talking		ESPN Golf	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	Tenjho Tenge	Shaman King	Full Metal Alchemist	Full House	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Darna	Encantadia	Sugo	Attic Cat	Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	The Insider	NBA On RPN					Biggest Loser		Newswatch Now	Sex & the City	Cerge For Truth	
IBC 13		EZ Shop		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Krusada Kontra Krimen		MTV				Demolition Monday		Outrageous	IBC News Tonite	Linawin Natin	
SBN 21		Morph TV		Oras Ng Himala		SBN Sing Along		Powerline	Gospel Of The Kingdom			Give Us This Day		Behold		The Kingdom Of Jesus Christ		Evening Devotions	
Studio 23						Super Gals		Get Backers	Beyblade	Wazzup Wazzup	America's Next Top Model	Tru Calling		Charmed		News Central	The Next Joe Millionaire		Travel Time
MTV Philippines	Spring Break 05 b Cancun: Hooked Up	MTV Urban Beats	MTV Get Spotted		Wade Robson # 107	Hangin Out at MTV		TRL		MTV Play		MTV Dives		Rockola	MTV Jams	Wildboyz # 103	Laguna Beach # 103	MTV Play	VH1 Video Collections
MYX	Star MYX	Urban MYX	Rock MYX	OPM MYX	My MYX	Take 5	MYX Backtrax	MYX Firsts	Mellow MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		OPM MYX Countdown		My MYX	OPM MYX	MYX Backtrax	Mellow MYX
CNN		Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	Living Golf	World News Asia		Your World Today	
Sports Plus						Ultimate Fighting Championship					Tour De France					Tour De France	B.C. Open Final		
Cinemax	Wheelmen (2:45 PM)			Out Of The Darkness			Lethal Tender (5:45 PM)			Japanese Story (7:15 PM)				Clockstoppers			Sweet Poison		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Wife Swap		HCA, The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Bewitched	The Nanny	Sue Thomas: FB Eye		Wife Swap		Angel In The Family			Regenesis (10:35PM)		Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye
Disney Channel	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	So Little Time	Buzz Lightyear Of Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Pixel Perfect			So Little Time	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Land Before Time IV Journey Through Mists	
Discovery Channel		Body Work		Mummy Autopsy		Lion Battlefield		Wild Weather		Unsolved History				Wild Discovery		Concorde: Anatomy Of Disaster		Rameses: Wrath Of God Or Man?	
National Geographic		Built For The Kill		Animals Like Us		Be The Creature		Wildlife Detectives	Insects From Hell	Wow		About Asia		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Built For The Kill		Animals Like Us	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	What's New Scooby Doo?	Atomic Betty		Medabots	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls		Time Squad	Thundercats	What's New Scooby Doo?	Atomic Betty
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Food 911	Area		NY Fashion Week	Life & Style		Life Is Great With Brooke Burke		Breathing Room	Genuine Article
Star World	Weird TV	The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	The King Of Queens	Still Standing	Yes Dear	Frasier	Boston Public		Friends	The King Of Queens
AXN		Lost		Worst Case Scenario		30 Seconds To Fame	E Buzz	The Associates (Season II)		Alias (Season III)		Record Setters		Fear Factor (Season V)		CSI: Miami		CSI: Miami	
JackTV	Street Smarts	Worst Case Scenario		WWE Heat		WWE Velocity		Cheat	Just For Laughs	Mad TV		Kid Notorious	Comedy Central Presents	Insomniac W/ Dave Attell	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Blue Collar TV	Banzai	Joe Schmo Show	
ETC		Complete Savages	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Friends	Will & Grace	The O.C		Queer eye For The Straight Guy		ET Weekend		Who Wants To Marry My Dad	
HBO	L.A. County 187 (2:35 PM)			I Love You To Death (4:10 PM)				Going For Broke (5:55 PM)			Disturbing Behavior			About Schmidt				Jaws 2	
Star Movies			Sister Act 2 (3:40 PM)				Detention			The Singing Detective				Species			Species 2 (10:45PM)	Dr X On The Air	
Cinema One		Sino Ang May Sala?				Calvento Files				May Pag-ibig Pa Kaya				Isinakdal ko ang Aking Ina					
EWTN	St. Matthew	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Benediction And Devotion	Story Keepers	Image Of God	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns Of Our Lady Of Angels Monastery	Light Of The East II	Voices On Value	EWTN Gallery	Threshold Of Hope Encore		Sunday Night Live With Fr Groeschel		Daily Mass		Angelus (10:15PM)	G.K. Chesterton	Catholic Compass	

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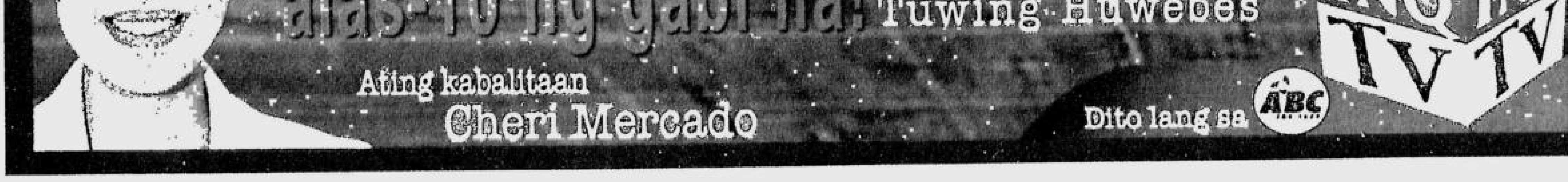

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4 of 7 filmfest entries linked to Mother Lily

By Nini Valera

FOUR out of seven movies chosen from screenplays as final entries to this year's Metro Manila Film Festival are apparently linked to Lily Monteverde.

As such, the four films would be a violation of the MMFF's revised rule limiting a producer to just two entries.

The announcement of the entries was made on Friday by Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando, overall chair of the annual film derby during the festival launch at Club Filipino.

Last year, MLR Fims, an independent movie producer asked the courts to issue a temporary restraining order against the MMFF for allegedly breaking its rules when the selection committee chose four movies produced by Monteverde. Three of these movies were directed by Joel Lamangan. But the TRO was not pursued even if certain sectors of the movie industry cried foul over the choice of four films from one producer.

Chosen few

The four entries from Monteverde in this year's filmfest are "Ako Legal Wife," a comedy under Regal Entertainment, directed by Joel Lamangan; "Shake, Rattle and Roll," also from Regal Entertainment; "Nasaan Ka Nang Kailangan Kita?" a drama from Good Harvest Unlimited (a satellite company of Regal), also directed by Lamangan; and the fantasy film "Mulawin," Monteverde's co-production with GMA Films.

The other entries are "Enteng Kabisote 2," from OctoArts Films and M-Zet TV Production, directed by Tony Reyes; director Jose Javier Reyes' "Kutob," produced by OctoArts Films' sister company, Canary Films; and the action-fantasy movie "Exodus, Tale of the Enchanted Kingdom," starring Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. and directed by Eric Matti.

Monteverde, who submitted a total of six screenplays, told INQUIRER Entertainment: "This is my way of showing how much I love the film industry."

"I want to produce and produce movies," she said. "I don't believe the industry is dead."

Another revision in the rules also expanded the selection process of the entries to include finished products.

Fernando said the finished products could also come from the screenplays, which did not qualify in the first selection process.

Three more

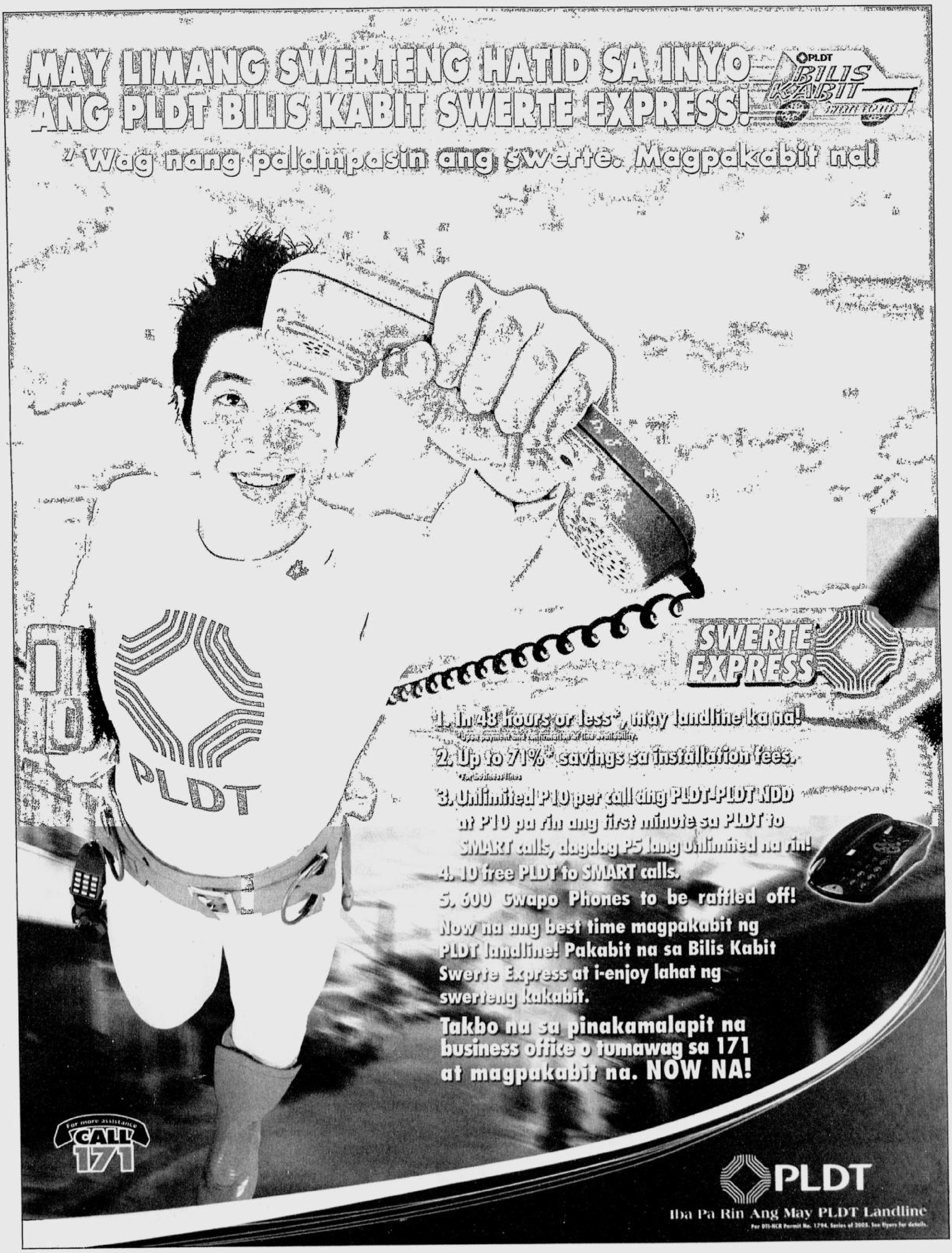
Deadline for the submission of finished films is on Dec. 5. Three more entries would be chosen based on the finished products. These would be shown on Jan. 1, 2006.

The first seven movies selected based on screenplay would have a Dec. 25 play date.

In case there would be no other film entries, the festival would proceed with just the first seven movies.

"But Star Cinema and Viva Films have committed to submit finished films as entries," said Esperidion Laxa, chair of the selection committee.

A total of 21 screenplays from 16 film outfits were submitted to the festival committee. These include CM Films' "Fatherland," which would have starred Cesar Montano under the direction of Gil Portes, and three from Violett Films, producer of the award-winning "Magnifico," directed by Maryo J. de los Reyes.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S ALSO means Suave, the other character Vhong is known for.

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Vhong: Mr. Suave

OUT OF THE CLOSET

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

"ALL I wanted was to dance. I never thought I'd get here. I have many things to be thankful for," said comedian Vhong Navarro, a former member of the popular dance group Streetboys.

Vhong said he also dreamed of being a pilot, but never an actor. "*Kaya lang masyado nang mataas ang pangarap na 'yun—lumipad na kasi*," he quipped. "I was content being part of a dance group. That's why I felt flattered that people supported me when I went solo."

Star Cinema launched Vhong's acting career via the comedy "Mr. Suave." It was a blockbuster, and was followed by other hits like "Otso-Otso Pamela-mela Wan" with Bayani Agbayani, and "Gagamboy," produced by Regal Films.

On July 27, Vhong's latest film, "D' Anothers," hits the theaters. It also stars Toni Gonzaga, John Pratts, Joross Gamboa, Roxanne Guinoo, Dominic Ochoa, Archie Alemania and veteran villainess Bella Flores. Joyce Bernal directs.

"People's faith and support have allowed me to take care of my family, too," Vhong told INQUIRER Entertainment during an interview in his Pasig City condominium. "I was able to build a house for my parents in Pasay City and buy a townhouse for myself in Quezon City."

He added: "I also got to travel and be known in other countries. I have bought my own car . . . and I meet all the needs of my two sons (Frederick Vhong, 9, and Isaiah Vhong 7)."

But he had a "serious side," Vhong insisted.

"I'm serious when it comes to my work," he said. "I study my roles well. I make sure the characters I create for my movies are different from one another. And though people see me in wacky and colorful outfits, the real me likes plain and simple clothes."

In Vhong's condo unit are many of his show biz souvenirs, including promotional materials from his movies and his life-sized standee used during the inauguration of a mall in Davao. His room has a bathroom and walk-in closet.

He is very organized, he said. He has a color scheme for clothes—prints and florals go together; plain colored shirts are in one place. His caps and hats are stored in racks, and his shoes are either in their boxes or neatly arranged on the floor.

SHIRTS

"Superman is my favorite super hero, so I own a couple of Superman shirts. *Kasi kapag sinusuot ko ito, pumapasok siya sa pagkatao ko.* I feel strong and unbeatable. S also means Suave, the other character I'm known for.

"When I buy polo shirts, I take those with a tapered cut. The right cut will make you look sexy, even if you don't work out. *Nasa nagdadala talaga.*

"And buy those you can wear even if you lose or gain weight. Floral polos used to be popular, now it's shirts with patches. (Showing some of his floral shirts) *Nahiram ko ito kay* [former Sen. Raul] Roco *at kay* Manila Mayor [Lito] Atienza."

SUITS

"*Hindi kami nagkakalayo ng* taste *ni* Kuya Germs *at* Bro. Mike Velarde *pagdating sa* suits. This pink suit is my favorite because pink is in fashion these days. I wore it in the pictorial for my new single, 'Don Romantiko,' with this printed long-sleeved polo, a hat, a pair of white pants and white slippers.

"I like weird designs, which is why I own this

PRINCE Charles wears this scent, too, says Vhong.

SHINY leather belt could also be used as mirror.

HAT collector. Vhong likes Von Dutch, "pwede ri

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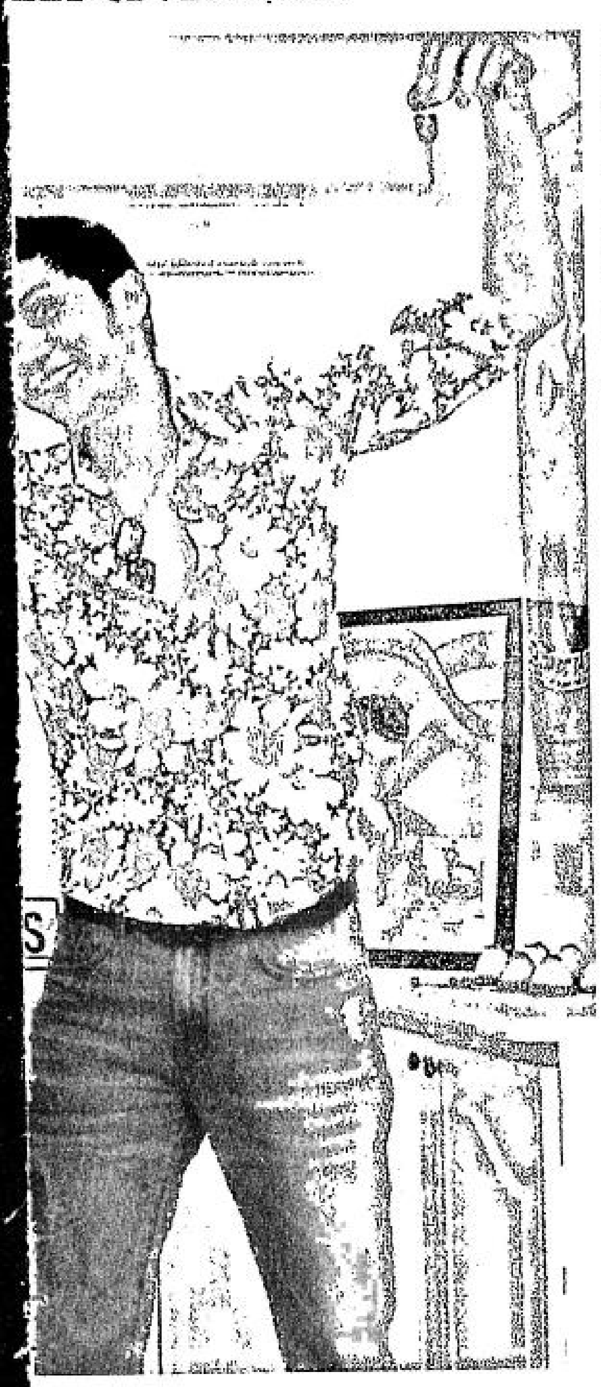

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pin-striped suit with neon prints. I like it because of its unique fabric and the prints. I bought this in the United States last January. I think suits like this are in fashion there.

"*Atin-atin lang 'to, ako si* Keanu Reeves. *Ayaw kong ipagmalaki sa inyo, pero ito 'yung sinuot ko dun sa* 'Matrix'—a leather suit jacket with matching leather slacks. I wore this at one Star Awards show where I was a presenter."

FOOTWEAR

"I also like buying weird shoes, for example, this pointed brown pair. *Dati kasi akong pirata, ito ang ginagamit ko. Mahilig din ako sa garapatang sapatos tulad nito* (shows a black round-toed pair with shoe straps, saying they reminded him of fleas).

"How I dress up depends on my mood. Sometimes I like the formal look, sometimes, casual. Converse provides most of the canvass rubber shoes I wear. Converse has lots of cool designs, like this one, comic strip prints. *Gusto ko kasi binabasa ko siya habang naglalakad.*

"I wear this black high-cut Chuck Taylors all the time. It's a classic. I could wear it with anything. I also own what is probably the most colorful Chuck Taylors so far. *Ganyan ang buhay ko*, colorful.

"This pink Chuck Taylor pair is also special. Other people don't always like it when guys wear pink. *Sasabihin nila, bading ka*. But when I wore this, a lot of people liked it. *Pwede pala.*

"My favorite pair of slippers is this white one with ethnic design. It looks good with either jeans or slacks. You look clean, feeling *mo haciendero ka at may mga rancho ka sa probinsya.*

"When I play basketball, I use my pair of Nike Jordan 12 Karachi. To get the most value for your money, look for basketball shoes that provide the best protection for the feet. Like if you're a rebounder, make sure you have enough ankle support. You should also feel comfortable when you're running.

"When I'm in a suit, I wear my black leather shoes. They change colors when hit by light from different angles.

"The most expensive pair I own right now was given to me on my birthday. It's a pair of Louis Vuitton leather shoes."

PANTS

"My favorite jeans are the tattered ones. *May nakasagupa kasi akong leon kaya nasira ang pantalon ko*. They have patches. *Parang hindi nagkasundo ang* designer *nila sa telang gagamitin kaya pinagsama-sama na lang*. I bought these in the US last year.

"Jeans don't have to be expensive. What's important is that they match your character. When it comes to cuts, I prefer both the boot cut and flared cut. *Parang* mow-del."

JACKETS

"*Hiniram ko muna itong* velvet jacket *kay* Boy Abunda. I've not worn this yet. I'm still waiting for the right occasion. Seriously, I bought this in one of the malls here. When I travel, I use my favorite denim jacket. It's classy. I could wear this with a T-shirt, polo or turtleneck."

ACCESSORIES

"Have I said that I liked Superman? That explains the Superman belt. But my favorite is this brown belt with a 'Superstar' buckle. The belt doesn't match my character, though, *mas bagay kay* Ate Guy. But it is my most expensive belt. I got it from Diesel.

"If I need to wear something formal, I use this (shows a black leather belt with a shiny rectangular metal buckle). *'Pag gusto mong manalamin, pwede rin ito.*

"This body bag was a gift from one of my cousins. I hardly use it. I just like looking at it. This is actually something I'd use only if I need to bring my wallet, cell phone and cologne to shows or tapings.

"I've been collecting caps since I joined Streetboys. Most of my caps are in my parent's house in Pasay City. I use this black baseball cap often. I had it especially made to match a pair of shoes that my mom bought abroad three years ago. The shoes have an interesting design. One shoe has an angel sewn on it, the other shoe has a devil.

"I've been using this Von Dutch trucker hat a lot lately. *Pwede rin kasi siyang* 'Vhong Dutch.' I think its made from suede.

"What's in fashion right now are the cowboy hats that I first saw on Justin Timberlake. I own one, and I used it for the 'Don Romantiko' pictorial."

PERFUME

"My current favorite is Bvlgari Extreme. *Ang sexy daw ng amoy nito sa akin.*

"I heard that Creed is the perfume that Prince Charles uses. The scent is refreshing. *Kahit ngarag ka na, mabango ka pa rin*. This is the most expensive perfume I own. I asked someone who went to the States recently to buy this for me. *Hanggang ngayon hindi ko pa nababayaran*. Sorry *po*."

"KUYA Germs and I share the same fashion sense," says Vhong. "I like weird designs."

n *kasi siyang* 'Vhong Dutch,'" he quips.

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Decidedly mixed bag of features

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

"GUINNESS World Records-Primetime" debuted on ABC-5 last Monday evening, regaling viewers with a decidedly mixed bag of features on attempts to set records in areas as diverse as being torched for two minutes (on the heroic side) and sticking as many clothespins as possible onto a person's face (at the other, sillier extreme).

The best thing about last Monday's show was the "human torch" feat. I shuddered as I witnessed the determined record-breaker stuffing himself into layer upon layer of fire-resistant clothing, plus a special gel that further retarded the fiery onslaught of the flames that billowed all over his body.

Previous attempts to set the record has failed miserably, with two contenders not being able to last for even one minute, and landing in the hospital for their pains.

But the new contender approached the challenge with greater inventiveness and method, so his attempt was successful.

However, the feat was deemed so dangerous that Guinness announced that, henceforth, no more new attempts would be entertained. So, the two-minute record for the "human torch" will remain in perpetuity.

The feature was riveting, but the other items in last Monday's show were less interesting. Like, for the nth time, we saw a feature on the Ice Hotel in Scandinavia.

The medical feature was off-putting because it was about a man with a huge facial tumor that was removed and then weighed to see if it would set a new record for the heaviest facial tumor on record (at 5 lbs., 8 ounces, it did).

In future, please spare us such yukky "achievements!" Instead, the show should concentrate on impressive feats involving not just medical oddity, but determination, strength, intelligence and other more active human gambits.

In general, the show's features were too extended and the host was too dour. Let's hope that these debit points are worked on in succeeding telecasts.

Finally, the show prompted us to wonder about the sort of person who initiates a campaign to set a Guinness record. We note that he tends to be different from other people, not just because he's intrepid, but also because he is often able to think up obscure and specialized categories that few other people would conjure up!

In so doing, he effectively limits the competition, so he gives himself an important advantage that makes it much easier for him to set a "world" record. How cynically "practical" can you get?

What about you, what arcane category can you think up for yourself, so that you too can romp off with a Guinness record? What about the longest time a person can skip rope while weaving the Philippine flag out of drinking straws and singing "Pamulinawen" in Portuguese? That may seem weird, but not much worse than some of the so-called "record-setting" feats that other people have thought up for themselves!

'ICU Bed #7'

RICA Arevalo's Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival entry, "ICU Bed #7," moves over from the CCP to UP's Cine Adarna today at 5 p.m. The move-over engagement will enable students from UP, Ateneo, Miriam and other schools in Quezon City to have easier access to the family drama, which stars **Eddie Garcia, Angel Aquino, Irma Adlawan** and **Nonie Buencamino.**

"ICU Bed #7" casts Garcia as a cantankerous family patriarch who lands in the ICU after a systematic breakdown resulting from too much smoking, drinking and high living. He learns a lot from the daunting experience, but his spirit and vitality remain intact.

The other Cinemalaya entries will also be shown at Cine Adarna until July 23.

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On Coco Lee and Pedicab

Or promoting image alongside the talent

By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

IMAGE plays a major role in determining the success of musical artists. In some instances, image is everything. In other cases, the proper handling of image complements the amount of genuine talent one needs to go big time.

We have two examples of image defining an artist's music.

Sexual Coco

Coco Lee is the first Asian artist to be signed by Sony's Epic Records. She's said to have a considerable fan base in America, Europe, Australia and Japan. Although most of the 16 albums she has recorded are in the Chinese language and said to have sold more than 10 million copies, Lee is poised to strike more gold with the release of "Exposed," her second full-length CD containing all-English songs.

Publicity photos, including the album cover, show Lee in suggestive poses and skimpy outfits that flaunt a sexual persona. The music video of "So Good," a cut from "Exposed," portrays Lee in seduction mode, out to make her lover drool.

Meeting the local press at the Summit Lounge of the Discovery Suites in Pasig recently, Lee confessed to being embarrassed when her folks saw the video. "It's kinda dirty, the most risqué video I've done so far," she said. "But I believe in the power of image. I believe in the whole package."

COCO Lee

Street-friendly

In "Exposed," the package consists of street-friendly tracks encompassing the currently hot R&B-dance-rap genres. It's a rather formula-driven album, one that takes no chances in climbing the sales charts because it reportedly employed the production team responsible for writing hits for Mariah Carey, Celine Dion and J Lo.

However, I can't really dismiss it as just another pop product because Lee apparently took pains in putting her artistic marks all over the album. She shares co-writing credits in at least eight songs. And most probably she encouraged, if not directly influenced, the incorporation of some thoroughly engaging Chinese ethnic sounds in several tracks.

Neither can I underestimate Lee's vocal prowess, which can be subtly emotional especially when she's singing about bittersweet romance, like in "Hush." That's an unexpected revelation, given her admission that "Exposed" has no sad songs.

Dance 'n' punk

Which brings us to Pedicab, a group ostensibly formed on a lark. Its lineup consists of members of existing bands like Sandwich, Twisted Halo, Cambio and Monsterbot. In an effort to separate their own identities, they've uncannily created a cool way to propagate image via the following sobriquets: Mappy (vocals), J. Sonic (guitars), Masterbeat Extra Service (drums), Sugaraims (synths) and Just Toni (video artist).

At the launch of Pedicab's debut CD "Tugish Takish" held recently at Virgin Café Timog, QC, questions from the press elicited the following image-conscious answers:

Why the name Pedicab?
"Kasi madaling sakyan."

What's "Tugish Takish"?
"It's what drums sound like."

How do you describe your music?
"A combination of dance and punk, so we want to call it 'dunk.'"

Partly inspired by such new wave acts as the B-52s, Devo and New Order, Pedicab transports the listener onto a surreal musical landscape dotted with unlikely situations and offbeat lyrics.

I can't make out for instance what "Ang Kailangan" means, although somehow I imagine the speaker struggling with neurosis in the age of digital wiretapping: *"Ang kailangan natin ngayon/ Panandaliang sarap/ Ang kailangan natin ngayon/ Pataas nang pataas/ Tumahimik ka, baka ka madulas/ Walang ligtas/ Mag-ayos ka, baka ka mahampas..."*

I can't figure out, either, what "Dito Tayo Sa Dilim" implies, even as I enjoy the incongruous fun it induces: *"Dito tayo sa dilim/ Kapit sa patalim/ Halika sa masikip/ Dun tayo pumikit/ Dun ka sa sahig/ Kung saan malamig/ punyetang init 'to/ Nakakapaso!"*

Not novelty

Lest they be accused of being smartalecky, the guys behind Pedicab offer this explanation: *"Yung mga kanta namin may* angst *na nakakatuwa. Pero hindi* novelty, *ha. Parang gimik na di masyadong seryoso. Kanya-kanyang interpretasyon lang yan."*

The way to get into Pedicab's trip is being able to appreciate irony and the absurd—in music or life itself. Think of Devo's "Whip It" or the B-52's "Rock Lobster." Or, if you want something closer to home: the atrocious, tragicomic masterstroke of the Garci tapes.

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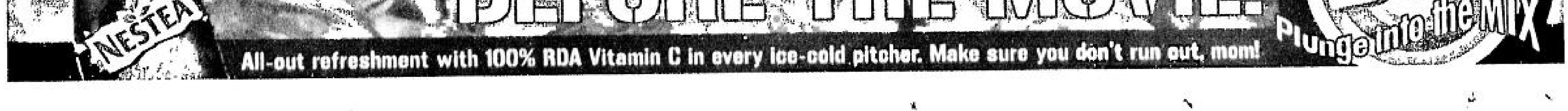

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Ayalas to bid for 67% stake in PNB

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE AYALAS' Bank of the Philippine Islands, the country's second biggest bank, will challenge tobacco magnate Lucio Tan over the right to buy a controlling stake in Philippine National Bank.

In an interview with the INQUIRER, BPI president Aurelio Montinola III said the bank had submitted the documents needed to prequalify for the auction on Aug. 12 of a 67-percent stake in PNB held jointly by the government and the Tan group.

"We submitted a letter of intent," Montinola said. "But we do it as a normal course—to look at other institutions."

A potential merger with PNB, assuming BPI would win the bidding, can catapult the bank into the country's biggest and finally edge out taipan George Ty's Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., which has been at the top since 1996.

"We always look where there's a willing seller. You never can tell but it's still very premature," the BPI chief added.

In separate interviews, Metrobank vice chair Placido Mapa said his bank was not keen on bidding for PNB while another top official, Metrobank executive vice president Angelito Villanueva, stressed the bank was not likely to undertake any major acquisition "in the immediate future."

BPI has started discussions with ING Bank, the financial adviser for the PNB bidding.

The deadline to submit prequalification documents for next month's bidding expired last July 1, but a government task force handling the sale led by Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC) does not intend to release the list of prequalified bidders.

"You will know the actual bidders when we open the bids," said Romeo Mendoza Jr., PDIC senior vice president and general counsel. "Suffice to say, the government is driving this privatization and the bidding will push through."

Mendoza said the minimum requirements for the bidding to push through, the current political turbulence notwithstanding, had been met—first, that Lucio Tan, who owned half of the stake to be auctioned, would participate, and at least one other bidder would challenge.

The Lucio Tan group has announced it would exercise its right to match the highest bid for the controlling stake in PNB.

Montinola said that BPI was on an expansion binge and evaluating about three or four potential acquisitions at one point.

He declined to say how advanced the negotiations were over the Santos family's controlling stake in another publicly listed universal bank, Prudential Bank. The banker said it was possible, however, that an acquisition deal—without specifically referring to Prudential Bank—may be completed this second half of the

AYALAS/B5

Go family faces uphill battle in EPCIB brawl

By Daxim L. Lucas

(First of a series)

TOMORROW'S annual stockholders' meeting of Equitable PCI Bank, if it pushes through, may very well determine the fortunes of shareholders fighting for control of the country's third-largest bank.

The meeting is especially critical for the Go family, led by bank chair Antonio Go, whose hold on Equitable PCI against the will of majority owners has been the subject of controversy in legal and media circles.

SPECIAL REPORT

Opposing the Gos is the group of retail magnate Henry Sy Sr., whose Banco de Oro Universal Bank (BDO) has embarked on an aggressive bank acquisition spree. Allied with this group are the Social Security System (SSS) and the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), which together, hold the biggest block of shares in the bank.

Having only recently recovered from a crippling bank run in 2001, Equitable PCI Bank is now BDO's prime target. At stake is P310 billion in assets under management, which can turn BDO overnight into the country's second largest bank from its current No. 7 rank.

For the embattled Go family, it is a matter of survival.

Survival strategy

To survive the Sy onslaught, the Go family has relied heavily on corporate and legal maneuverings, while summarily trampling on the rights of other stakeholders, critics claim.

"As far as we're concerned, the Gos are ignoring what we're entitled to, which is commensurate representation on the board," said Reynaldo Palmiery, GSIS executive vice president. "Their handling of the bank is inconsistent with principles of good corporate governance."

The Go family owns only 25 percent of the bank's outstanding shares, equivalent to four board seats, while both pension funds own a combined 40 percent, equivalent to six board seats.

Palmiery, who also represents the state pension fund on the bank's board, said the interests of GSIS pensioners are threatened "if the Go family remains unchecked."

Checking the Go camp's moves is now foremost on the minds of the bank's other shareholders.

The Sy camp last week succeeded in obtaining a court order temporarily barring the implementation of pro-Go amendments to the bank's bylaws. The amendments would have effectively prevented the appointment of board directors sympathetic to the Sy camp.

Fresh from this victory, the SSS and GSIS are now pressing the attack, asking the Makati Regional Trial Court to bar the Go family from voting the 10.8 percent of the bank's shares held by its investment house subsidiary.

Critics are now worried that the Gos will post-

GO FAMILY/B4

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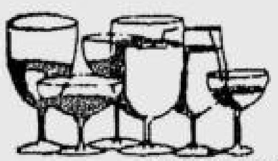

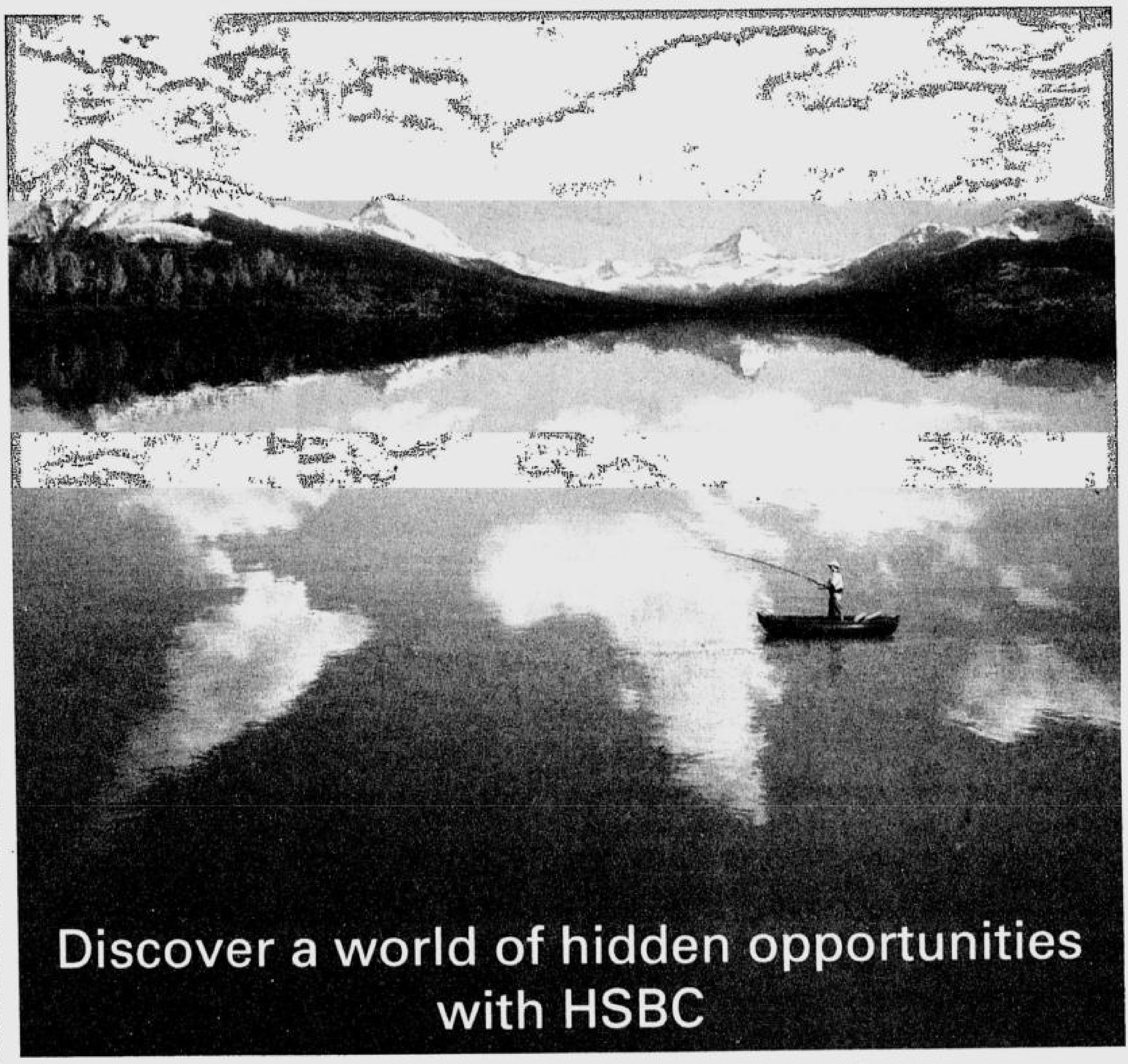

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Politics and market movements

NO FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito

THREE Fridays ago, when the Supreme Court stopped the implementation of Republic Act No. 9337 or the expanded VAT law with a temporary restraining order, the stock market and the value of the peso in the foreign exchange markets promptly moved down.

Most were quick to attribute the negative market movements to the high court's action. After all, failure to implement the expanded VAT would severely set back government efforts to overcome its ongoing fiscal crisis, thereby casting doubt on the economy's future stability.

Two Fridays ago, when the "Hyatt 10" set off a momentum of high-profile calls for the President's resignation, both the stock market and the value of the peso rose as if to welcome what appeared to be her imminent departure.

But as it became evident in succeeding days that the Malacañang occupant was digging in and was not about to leave just yet, the markets moved downward once more. And along with it came the credit outlook downgrades from Fitch, Standard & Poor and Moody's rating services.

Some might read these as clear signals that the investment community would welcome the President's departure, and would fret with her prolonged stay. But hasn't Malacañang been threatening us with the specter of economic doom should the President step down at this time?

Last week, upon announcing more new Cabinet appointments, the President proudly declared that the stock market had climbed to welcome the appointment of her new finance secretary—and by implication, her continued hold on government.

Overrating politics

But all this may be reading too much into recent market trends, say seasoned stock analyst friends I have consulted. With all due respect for my friend Secretary Gary Teves, who would be an asset in any Cabinet, they tell me that attributing the subsequent stock market rise to his appointment was stretching things a little bit too far.

They tell me, too, that the markets do not appear to care as much about who might succeed the President, as her supporters would have us believe.

What appears more important to the market players is how quickly a resolution to the political turmoil can be reached. And indications are that a prompt voluntary resignation would be welcomed more than prolonging the crisis through a protracted impeachment process and accompanying mass actions.

Former President Cory Aquino had said as much. If one takes a dispassionate consideration of her message to the current President, she is actually giving sound advice based on a perceptive grasp of the realities.

External drivers

As I surveyed my stock analyst friends, I tried to confirm with them my general impression that the day-to-day movements in our stock and currency markets have been conditioned more by external factors, and less by our internal political developments.

Lately, the dominant external drivers have been the movements in world oil prices and the value of the dollar relative to other major currencies. That is, as oil prices and the value of the dollar rise, currencies and stock markets in the region tend to fall.

A look at market trends in the rest of the region tends to confirm my suspicion that we may be overrating the importance of our own internal politics in the behavior of the markets.

For example, the drop in our currency in the week of the Supreme Court action on the expanded VAT Law was not unique to the Philippines. Nor was our depreciation the worst.

In fact, while the Philippine peso closed 0.4 percent lower at the end of that week, the Thailand baht had actually dropped 2 percent, the South Korean won was down by 2.3 percent, the Singapore dollar by 0.9 percent, the Taiwan dollar by 1.4 percent, and the Japanese yen by also 0.4 percent.

Analysts attributed the depreciation to the zooming oil prices that week.

Poor political capital

As for the stock market, the drop in that week largely came from sell-offs in a single issue, that of SM Investments, which went down 3.53 percent. This is hardly indicative of widespread loss of confidence in the economy.

The Phisix index has, in fact, been closely following the movement of the Dow Jones 1800 Asia Pacific index since the start of the year, indicating that our stock market movements have been largely driven by factors well beyond our own internal developments.

This is not to say that our political troubles have no impact on the equity and currency markets; there is evidence of that as well.

But more perceptive market analysts know that Malacañang may be stretching things a bit when it claims credit for certain positive market movements. And this goes just as well with opposition claims in the reverse.

The lesson here is that market movements do not necessarily make good political capital, whichever side you're on.

Feedback

There is a positive rejoinder to the case of that politically biased high-school economics textbook that I wrote about several weeks ago (NFL, 5/30/05). I received a note from Dr. Dennis T. Gonzalez, chairman of the National Book Development Board (NBDB), who writes: "I am pleased to inform you that Vibal Publishing House has just produced an updated edition of its "Economics: Theories and Principles" by Julia Rillo, Bernard Balitao and Nilda Cruz. On page 23 of this updated edition, it lists the "economic highlights" of the administrations of Fidel Ramos (six items) and Corazon Aquino (five items), unlike the 1998 edition that had no item for Ramos and only one for Aquino."

I thank the parent who originally brought the matter to my attention, and Dr. Gonzalez for NBDB's prompt action on the matter. It pays for us parents to look more closely at the textbooks our children are reading in school. *Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu*

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12 names up for hotly contested EPCIB seats

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez and Doris C. Dumlao

TWELVE names have been submitted as possible candidates for three hotly contested seats on the board of Equitable PCI Bank, ahead of its controversial stockholder's meeting tomorrow.

But the confirmation of the nominees for the independent directors' positions has been met with delay as the law firm Accra, Equitable PCI's external legal counsel, has yet to finish its own background check on the qualifications of the candidates, said Antonio Go, EPCIB chair.

Sources told the INQUIRER that the list still includes Roberto Romulo, former presidential adviser on international competitiveness, and Fulgencio Factoran Jr., former environment and natural resources secretary.

Last week, the Securities and Exchange Commission barred both nominees from sitting as independent bank directors due to positions they purportedly held in EPCIB's other affiliates.

The remaining 10 nominees are former Ambassador Cesar Bautista, former diplomat Antonio Basilio, retired justice Teodoro Regino, Anthony Te, former Crown Equities director Ricardo Murillo, former trade and tourism secretary Peter Garrucho Jr., former banker Isidro Alcantara Jr., Trade Undersecretary Gregory Domingo, former United Coconut Planters Bank president Edward Go, and Local Government and Unit Guarantee Corp. president Jesus Tirona.

Romulo, Basilio and Bautista are the present independent directors of the board.

Those nominated to the bank's 15-man board include EPCIB chair Antonio Go and executives John Go, Anthony Conway, Genevieve Go, Peter Go Pailian, Jonathan Go, and bank president Rene Buenaventura.

The nominees of the Social Security System are Corazon de la Paz, Ramon Jabar, Nazario Cabuquit Jr., Miguel Roca Jr., Gamelin Oczon, Rizaldy Capulong and Ma. Luz Generoso.

The nominees of the Government Service Insurance System are Winston Garcia, Bernardino Abes, Reynaldo Palmiery, Jesse Andres and Omelita Tiangco.

The nominees of minority shareholder Trans Middle East Phils. are Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, Benjamin Philip Romualdez, Andrea de la Cueva, Orilin Dimayuga-Molo and Hermogene Real.

Despite the ongoing shareholder squabble, the country's third largest bank expects profits to grow by at least 10 percent this year over the six-year high of P1.8 billion which EPCIB chalked up in 2004.

The bank's 2004 net income rose by 55 percent from the previous year, driven by higher interest and fee-based income.

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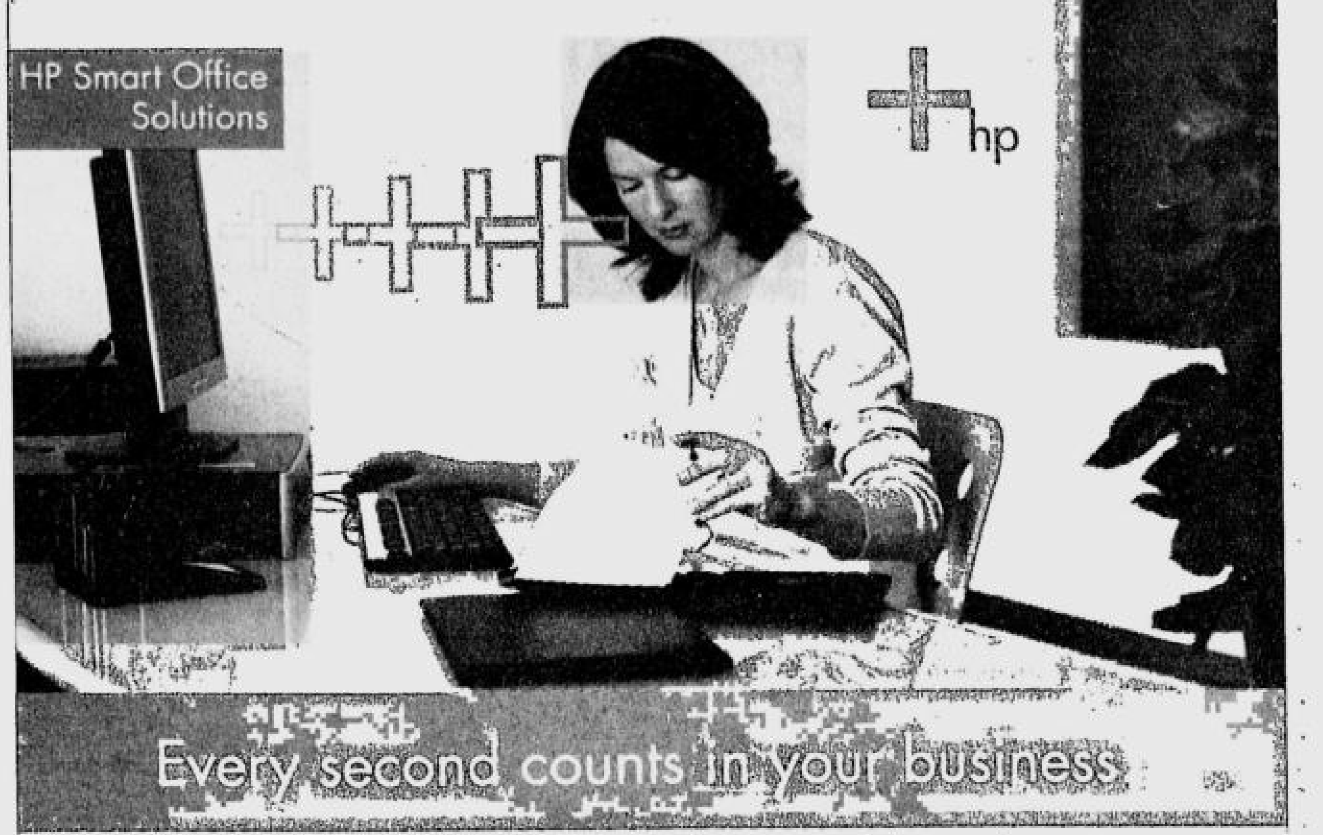
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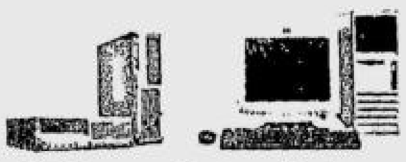
Discover the enviable efficiency and convenience of running a smooth business when you invest in the HP Compaq Business Desktop dc7100. Powered by Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor with HT Technology† and the Intel® Chipset, this desktop offers a common software image, enhanced manageability solutions, easy to understand product offerings and global availability and warranty. The HP Compaq Business Desktop dc7100 offers key technology improvements with PCI Express graphics, High speed Serial ATA interfaces and the Hyper-Threading Technology† to help you get the best out of your IT investment. HP's unmatched efficiency saves you on time and effort, allowing for more productivity! So if you want every second to really count in your business, invest in these desktops from HP today!

HP recommends Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional.



HP Compaq Business Desktop dc7100 Convertible Minitower
HP Compaq Business Desktop dc7100 Small Form Factor

PHP57,950 Stable, manageable, secure desktop solutions that reduce IT complexity

- Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor 530 with HT Technology^†*
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional
- Intel® 915G Chipset
- 256MB PC3200 DDR
- 40GB Serial ATA100 7200RPM
- 52X CD-ROM drive
- 1.44MB Floppy Drive (Convertible Minitower only)
- Integrated Broadcom NetXtreme Gigabit Ethernet
- 3-year parts, 3-year labor, and 3-year on-site service (next business day)
- HP S5502 15"CRT Monitor

^ (1MB Cache, 3GHz, 800MHz FSB)

With Microsoft Office Small Business Edition: Php 71,940

HP Compaq Business Desktop dx2000 Microtower

New Product

PHP51,950

- Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor with HT Technology† 3GHz
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional
- Intel® 865GV Chipset
- 256MB DDR (PC 3200) memory
- 80GB Hard Disk Drive (7200rpm)
- 52X CD-ROM drive
- 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- Integrated Intel® Audio with Internal Speaker
- Intel® Extreme Graphics
- Integrated Intel® PRO/100
- 1-year parts, 1-year labor, and 1-year on-site service (next business day)
- HP S5502 15" CRT monitor

With Microsoft Office Small Business Edition: Php 65,940

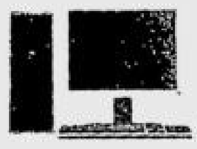
HP Compaq Business Desktop d220 Microtower

New Product

PHP49,950

- Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor 2.80GHz
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional
- Intel® 845GV Chipset
- 256MB DDR (PC 2700) memory
- 40GB Hard Disk Drive (5400rpm)
- 48X CD-ROM Drive
- 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- Integrated Intel® Audio with Internal Speaker
- Intel® Extreme Graphics
- Integrated Broadcom 10/100 Ethernet
- 3-year parts, 1-year labor, and 1-year on-site service (next business day)
- HP S5502 15" CRT monitor

With Microsoft Office Small Business Edition: Php 63,940



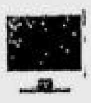
HP Compaq Workstation xw4200

PHP98,490

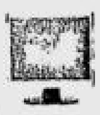
- Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor 3GHz
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional
- 512MB DDR2-533ECC
- 80GB SATA /150 HDD
- 48X DVD-ROM / CD-RW Combo Drive
- ATI FireGL V3100 128MB PCI-E Video Card
- 3-year parts, 3-year labor, 3-year on site warranty
- HP L1955 19" TFT
- USB Optical Scroll Mouse
- PS/2 Keyboard

With Microsoft Office Small Business Edition: Php 112,490

Enhance viewing on our featured desktops with HP's range of LCD Monitors.

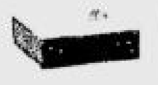


HP Flat Panel Monitor L1502
- (15") 38.1cm Analog TFT
- Maximum resolution of 1024 x 768
- 3-year on-site warranty
- PHP15,799



HP Flat Panel Monitor L1702
- (17") 43.18cm Analog TFT
- Maximum resolution of 1280 x 1024
- 3-year on-site warranty
- PHP18,799

Complement these HP Desktops with these HP peripherals:



HP 16x DVD +/- RW Drive (D Layer / DF / LightScribe)
- PHP6,199

Bluetooth 3-in-1 Bundle Kit (Transceiver, mouse, thumb Drive)
- PHP5,299

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Go family faces uphill battle in EPCIB brawl

From page B1

pone the bank's stockholders' meeting to stave off the imminent takeover of the bank.

Pro-Go bank officials dismiss this possibility.

"Tuesday's meeting will push through and we have already publicly addressed the unfounded concerns that there are plans to postpone the meeting," the bank's corporate secretary Nilo Divina said in an e-mailed statement.

Smarting from their own setbacks on the board, however, SSS and GSIS have asked the court to prevent any shareholder from causing the meeting to be postponed.

"In this case, we're trying to prevent the minority [shareholders] from 'railroading' the majority," Palmiery said.

A checkered past

Despite its checkered past, Equitable PCI remains one of the most attractive banks for investors and creditors.

Last year, it posted a "better-than-expected" net income of P1.8 billion, representing a 39-percent increase over its previous year's performance. Return on equity—what shareholders earn on their investment—is also rising, having hit 9.18 percent last year from 7.33 percent in 2003.

More importantly, its deposit base has risen to P194 billion at the end of 2004 from P138 billion in the previous year. By any measure, this represents a dramatic recovery from only four years ago when a massive bank run in the wake of the Estrada plunder trial drained the bank of, according to the central bank, some P90 billion in deposits in a matter of weeks.

It was forced to seek a P30-billion emergency loan from bank regulators—the largest recorded in local banking history. But the bank staged a dramatic turnaround and repaid the loan in full within a year.

In a research note published last week, brokerage firm Philippine Equity Partners, Inc. pointed out that the bank "remains undervalued" as investors' attention are being diverted to the boardroom brawl.

"All the noise ahead of the meeting, coupled with weakness in the overall market, has weighed down on the stock price of Equitable PCI," the PEP research note said. "We continue to rate [the bank] as a 'buy'."

The brokerage firm believes Equitable PCI's fair market value could rise to as high as P66 per share, given current conditions.

It is this attractiveness that has caught the eye of the Henry Sy group, according to Equitable PCI independent director Roberto Romulo, who is himself under fire for allegedly aligning himself with the Go family.

Romulo expressed fears that the Sy-owned BDO—allied with SSS and GSIS—are trying to drive down the share price of Equitable PCI to the pre-agreed level of P43.50 per share to facilitate the takeover.

"They want to buy in on the cheap," Romulo said.

Organized campaign?

Romulo laments, however, that his protests are being ignored by the mainstream media and that public opinion is moving steadily against the Go camp due to "tactics of vilification and outright lying being employed by the other side in order to achieve its goals."

For his stand against the Sys, Romulo said he has been "pilloried no end by paid hacks in the media."

Adverse publicity notwithstanding, the Gos' hold on Equitable PCI is steadily being pried loose with each passing day.

Romulo's disqualification as an independent director follows a sharp rebuke from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) over the failure of Equitable PCI to sell the disputed 10.8 percent "treasury shares" as agreed six years ago. BSP threatened Equitable PCI with stiff sanctions should it continue to ignore the regulatory requirements.

Fearing a repeat of the crisis that beset the bank in 2001, the BSP has carefully avoided making a public stand on the issue.

Asked about the impact of the shareholder squabble on Equitable PCI's operations, BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said: "We won't make a statement on the issue unless it's something positive or in support of the bank. So, I won't comment."

(To be continued)

UCPB PROPERTY MARKET
MID-YEAR BONUS AUCTION
10% DOWNPAYMENT 11% INTEREST 10 YEARS TO PAY
JULY 30, 2005 • 9:00 A.M. • UCPB BLDG., MAKATI AVE., MAKATI CITY
LUZON COUNTRYSIDE

ANTIPOLO

UCPB 1043 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 834sqm
Selford St., Town & Country Estates
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,536,000.00

UCPB 1044 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 204sqm
19 Palm Ave., Town & Country Exec.
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,250,000.00

UCPB 1045 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A.185sqm, F.A 164sqm
Coolidge St., Cuesta Verde Executive Village
Minimum Bid Price: P 944,000.00

UCPB 1046 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 678sqm (VARIOUS)
Parkridge Exec. Village, Bo. Mayamot
Minimum Bid Price: P 705,000.00

UCPB 1047 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 1,151sqm
Town & Country Estates, Bo. Mayamot
Minimum Bid Price: P 3,499,000.00

UCPB 1048 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 1,145sqm
Town & Country Estates Bo Mayamot
Minimum Bid Price: P 3,480,000.00

UCPB 1049 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 1,004sqm
Brgy. Road, Brgy May-iba, Teresa
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,384,000.00

UCPB 1050 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 192sqm, F.A 120sqm
#8 Mayon St., Town & Country Hills
Minimum Bid Price: P 842,000.00

UCPB 1051 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 662sqm
Parkridge Estates, Bo. Mayamot
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,332,000.00

UCPB 1052 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 512sqm
Parkridge Estates, Bo. Mayamot
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,024,000.00

CAINTA/ TAYTAY/ ANGONO

UCPB 1053 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 55.50sqm
L4 B8 La Mar Subd., Brgy. Gitnang Bayan
Minimum Bid Price: P 140,000.00

UCPB 1054 - 2 STORY RESIDENTIAL
L.A. 493sqm
21 Corona St., Village East Exec. Homes
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,730,000.00

UCPB 1055 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 240 sqm, FA 2087sqm
Williamburg St., Richmond Subd., Angono
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,512,000.00

UCPB 1056 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 204sqm
Village East III, Darangan, Binangonan
Minimum Bid Price: P 326,000.00

UCPB 1057 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 204sqm
Village East III, Darangan, Binangonan
Minimum Bid Price: P 328,000.00

UCPB 1058 - AGRI LAND
L.A. 230,226sqm
Along Feeder Rd., Bo. Gulinang Bayan
Minimum Bid Price: P 9,208,000.00

UCPB 1059 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 4,745sqm
Coronado St., Vista Verde Exec. Vill
Minimum Bid Price: P 7,972,000.00

BULACAN

UCPB 1060 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 209sqm
Avocado St., Area F, Bo. Sapang Palay
Minimum Bid Price: P 320,000.00

UCPB 1061 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 161sqm
Opel St., Villacor Vill., Bo. Langka Meycauayan
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,560,000.00

UCPB 1062 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 221sqm
3rd Street, Bo. Fatima Sapang Palay, SJDM
Minimum Bid Price: P 320,000.00

UCPB 1063 - IND'S FACTORY
L.A. 22,311.48sqm F.A VARIOUS
Northwest Line of Provincial Rd., Bo. Patubig
Minimum Bid Price: P 32,929,000.00

UCPB 1064 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 297sqm
L1 B58 Ilang Ilang, Area C, Sapang Palay
Minimum Bid Price: P 480,000.00

UCPB 1065 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A 523sqm
Area A, Sapang Palay SJDM
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,400,000.00

UCPB 1066 - COMML w/ IMPRVMT
L.A. 347sqm
L20 B27 Assumption Rd., Area C. Sapang Palay
Minimum Bid Price: P 489,000.00

CAVITE

UCPB 1067 - CONDOTEL
L.A 182.88sqm
Southwoods Villa, Carmona
Minimum Bid Price: P 4,243,000.00

UCPB 1068 - RESORT BLDG
L.A 1,238sqm w/ POOL
Villa Ramirez Subd., Bo. Tabon, Kawit
Minimum Bid Price: P 3,352,000.00

UCPB 1069 - COMMERCIAL LOT
L.A 4,999sqm
Macaria Business Center, Bo. Poblacion
Minimum Bid Price: P 35,993,000.00

UCPB 1070 - COMMERCIAL LOT
L.A 3,324sqm
Macaria Business Center, Bo. Poblacion
Minimum Bid Price: P 23,933,000.00

UCPB 1071 - CONDOTEL/RESORT
F.A 71sqm
Vista De Loro Heights, Puerto Azul
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,496,000.00

UCPB 1072 - INDUSTRIAL LOT
L.A 7,079sqm
Bo. Niog II, Bacoor
Minimum Bid Price: P 6,268,000.00

UCPB 1073 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A 486sqm (VARIOUS)
Manila Southwoods, Carmona
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,944,000.00

UCPB 1074 - RESORT
L.A. 240sqm
Punta De Rio Resort, Garden Coast
Minimum Bid Price: P 6,712,000.00

BINAN/ SAN PEDRO & STA ROSA

UCPB 1075 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 1,851sqm F.A 450sqm
Pooc, Sta. Rosa, Beside Zavalla Elem
Minimum Bid Price: P 4,139,500.00

UCPB 1076 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 155sqm, F.A 95sqm (Lot 5-B)
Rosal St., El Vinda Village, San Pedro
Minimum Bid Price: P 643,000.00

UCPB 1077 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A 150sqm, Venezia cor. Verona, Romanville, Sta Rosa
Minimum Bid Price: P 445,000.00

UCPB 1078 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 370sqm, F.A 214.50sqm
529 Mahalna St., United San Pedro
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,160,000.00

UCPB 1078 A - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 140sqm F.A 75.5sqm
Casablanca, Ciudad Grande, Sta. Rosa
Minimum Bid Price: P 700,000.00

LAGUNA

UCPB 1079 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 249sqm (L10 Blk8)
Richwood Park Village, San Pablo
Minimum Bid Price: P 486,795.00

UCPB 1080 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 300sqm F.A 210.6sqm
L17 B3 Richwood Park Villa. San Pablo
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,826,500.00

UCPB 1081 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 60,000sqm
Barrio of Palasan, Mun. of Sta Cruz
Minimum Bid Price: P 8,400,000.00

UCPB 1082 - 2 STRY RSDL BLDG
L.A. 200sqm F.A 205.84sqm
L6 B3, Marymount, Anos, Los Baños
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,732,300.00

UCPB 1083 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 458sqm
Ocampo Comp., Sta Clara Sur, Pila
Minimum Bid Price: P 380,000.00

UCPB 1084 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 433sqm (2LOTS)
Molave cor. Yakal, Cardil Village, San Pablo
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,050,000.00

UCPB 1085 - RSDL/COMML
L.A. 355sqm , along Nat'l Hi-way
Adelina Agri. Banca Banca, Victoria
Minimum Bid Price. P 5,086,000.00

TAGAYTAY CITY

UCPB 1086 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 265sqm
Hollywood Subd., Tagaytay
Minimum Bid Price. P 1,511,000.00

UCPB 1087 - VACANT LOT
L.A. 11,572sqm
Bo. Maharlika East, Tagaytay
Minimum Bid Price P 16,800,000.00

BATANGAS CITY

UCPB 1088 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 61,815sqm
TM Kalaw St. cor. CB Lopez, Poblacion
Minimum Bid Price: P 7,930,000.00

UCPB 1089 - GAS STATION
L.A 12,387sqm
Nat'l Rd., Bugtong Napulo, Lipa
Minimum Bid Price. P 22,814,000.00

UCPB 1090 - AGRI LOT
L.A. 72,842sqm
Brgy. Rd., Brgy. Tangob, Lipa
Minimum Bid Price: P 9,000,000.00

UCPB 1091 - 3 STRY RSDL BLDG
L.A. 234sqm
Carandang Comp., Brgy. Poblacion, Lipa
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,134,000.00

UCPB 1092 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A 353sqm (VARIOUS)
Palmridge Pointe, Batangas
Minimum Bid Price. P 734,240.00

UCPB 1093 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A 444sqm (VARIOUS)
Palmridge Pointe, Batangas
Minimum Bid Price P 816,960.00

UCPB 1094 - BUNGALOW w/
L.A. 32,960sqm WAREHOUSE
Brgy. Pusil, Lipa
Minimum Bid Price: P 9,670,000.00

UCPB 1095 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 200sqm
Ayala Highway By-Pas, Nat'l Rd. Balintawak, Lipa
Minimum Bid Price: P 187,000.00

UCPB 1096 - COMMERCIAL LOT
L.A. 911sqm
Ayala Highway By-Pas, Nat'l Rd. Balintawak, Lipa
Minimum Bid Price: P 9,059,895.00

UCPB 1097 - INDUSTRIAL LOT
L.A. 1,000sqm
Ayala Highway By-Pas, Nat'l Rd. Balintawak, Lipa
Minimum Bid Price: P 4,590,000.00

UCPB 1098 - 2 STRY RSDL BLDG
L.A. 233sqm (VARIOUS)
Fatima St., Miracle Height Subd., Ph I, Lipa
Minimum Bid Price: P 5,760,000.00

UCPB 1099 - AGRI-INDTR'L LOT
L.A. 10,003sqm
Brgy San Felipe, Padre Garcia
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,990,000.00

UCPB 1100 - COMMERCIAL LOT
L.A. 10,340sqm
Pro. Rd., Brgy. Tambo, Lipa
Minimum Bid Price. P 19,150,000.00

UCPB 1100 A - RSDL W/ IMPRVMT
L.A. 1,145sqm
Brgy San Sebastian, Lipa
Minimum Bid Price. P 8,260,000.00

CAGAYAN

UCPB 1101 - COMML W/ IMPRVMNT
L.A. 4,106sqm
Luna St., Brgy. Ugac Sur, Tuguegarao
Minimum Bid Price: P 27,165,000.00

PALAWAN

UCPB 1102 - COMML w/ IMPRVMT
L.A. 433sqm
Bo. San Miguel, Puerto Prinsesa
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,290,000.00

UCPB 1103 - RESORT
L.A. 2,672sqm
Tiniguiban, Brgy. Sta. Monica
Minimum Bid Price: P 534,000.00

MINDORO ORIENTAL & OCCIDENTAL

UCPB 1104 - RSDL w/ IMPRVMT
L.A 367sqm
A Mabini St., Bo. Labangan, , Poblacion San Jose
Minimum Bid Price: P 815,000.00

UCPB 1105 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 599sqm, F.A 161sqm
A. Quezon St., Bo. 8, Poblacion San Jose
Minimum Bid Price: P 863,000.00

QUEZON

UCPB 1106 - INDT'L & COMML LOT
L.A. 17,129sqm
Along Diversion Road., Isabang Tayabas
Minimum Bid Price: P 10,752,500.00

UCPB 1107 - RSDL W/ IMPRVMT
L.A. 75sqm BUNGALOW
Lot 5E-2 Rosemarie Comp., Brgy. VIII
Minimum Bid Price: P 190,000.00

UCPB 1108 - RSDL W/ IMPRVMT
L.A. 124sqm
Mangosteen Place, Sta. Isabel Ph I
Minimum Bid Price: P 590,000.00

UCPB 1109 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 183sqm
Charity St., Rosario Village, Brgy. Iyam
Minimum Bid Price: P 350,000.00

UCPB 1110 - RSDL w/ IMPRVMT
L.A. 191sqm
Milagros St., Capitol Homesite Subd., Cotta
Minimum Bid Price: P 570,000.00

UCPB 1111 - RSDL w/ IMPRVMT
L.A. 374sqm
Loreta St., Capitol Homesite Subd. Cotta
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,715,000.00

UCPB 1112 - RSDL w/ IMPRVMT
L.A. 303sqm
L7 B17 Rosario Village, Brgy. Iyam
Minimum Bid Price. P 570,000.00

UCPB 1113 - COMML LOT
L.A. 811sqm
M L Quezon & C.O Reyes St., Poblacion, Atimonan
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,600,000.00

UCPB 1114 - COMMERCIAL LOT
L.A. 3,959sqm
Lucena-Dalahican Port Rd., Dumacaa
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,188,750.00

UCPB 1115 - COMMERCIAL LOT
L.A. 5,074sqm
Quezon Ave., Brgy. 8, Lucena
Minimum Bid Price: P 25,000,000.00

UCPB 1116 - COMML W/IMPRVMNT
L.A. 500sqm 3 STRY BLDG
Nadres cor. Solazar St., Brgy. Labangan Poblacion
Minimum Bid Price: P 15,500,000.00

UCPB 1117 - COMMERCIAL LOT
L.A. 147sqm
Enriquez St., Poblacion, Lucena
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,700,000.00

UCPB 1118 - COMML LOT
L.A. 1,508 sqm
National Road, Bo. Iyam, Lucena
Minimum Bid Price: P 4,475,250.00

UCPB 1119 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 1,147sqm
San Isidro Subd., Bo. Gulang-gulang Lucena
Minimum Bid Price: CALL US

UCPB 1120 - RSDL W/ IMPRVMT
L.A. 268sqm
San Jose St., Marlag Comp., Gulang
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,290,000.00

UCPB 1121 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 360sqm
#19 Bolivia St., Betterliving Subd. Isabang
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,340,000.00

BATAAN CITY

UCPB 1122 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A 300sqm, F.A 189sqm
Halcon St., Mt View Subd. Bo. Cabcaben, Mariveles
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,394,000.00

UCPB 1123 - AGRI - LAND
L.A. 269,348sqm
Brgy. Balon Anito, Mariveles
Minimum Bid Price: P 16,160,000.00

TARLAC CITY

UCPB 1124 - POULTRY FARM
L.A 43,698 sqm. (5 Poultry House)
Bo. Rd., Bo. Sta Ines West, Sta Ignecia
Minimum Bid Price: P 1,690,000.00

UCPB 1125 - RESIDENTIAL BLDG
L.A. 712sqm
Villa Solman Subd., Brgy. Salapungan
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,826,000.00

UCPB 1126 - AGRI - LOT
L.A. 111,656sqm
Villa Solman Subd., Brgy. Salapungan
Minimum Bid Price: P 5,580,000.00

UCPB 1127 - INDS'T W/ IMPRVMT
L.A. 18,432sqm
Nat'l Highway, Brgy. San Juan De Mata
Minimum Bid Price: P 3,720,000.00

UCPB 1128 - RSDL W/ IMPRVMT
L.A. 300sqm
Avocado St., Brgy. Sto. Domingo II Capas
Minimum Bid Price: P 180,000.00

UCPB 1129 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 1,379sqm
Romulo Highway (Brgy. Tibag)
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,040,000.00

ISABELA

UCPB 1130 - RSDL W/ IMPRVMT
L.A. 7,500sqm
Rufino Roque Ext., Brgy. Plaridel Santiago
Minimum Bid Price: P 3,675,000.00

UCPB 1131 - COMMERCIAL w/ WAREHOUSE
L.A. 742sqm
Pro. Rd., Brgy. Poblacion (Dubinan East)
Minimum Bid Price: P 5,530,000.00

UCPB 1132 - COMML w/ IMPRVMT
L.A. 1,157sqm
Nat'l Rd. cor Recto St., Brgy. Poblacion
Minimum Bid Price: P 11,000,000.00

UCPB 1133 - COMML w/ IMPRVMT
L.A. 1,615sqm
Nat'l Rd. cor Recto St., Brgy. Poblacion
Minimum Bid Price: P 11,990,000.00

CAMARINES SUR/ NORTE

UCPB 1134 - AGRI - LAND
L.A. 10,074sqm
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L.A. 240sqm WAREHOUSE
San Isidro, Calabangan
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UCPB 1137 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 780sqm
Bo. Bagasbas. (Bo. Burabod) Daet
Minimum Bid Price: P 250,000.00

UCPB 1138 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 830sqm
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Minimum Bid Price: P 565,000.00

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L.A. 745sqm
Brgy. Pawig (Diversion Rd.) Daet
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UCPB 1140 - COMML & RSDL BLDG
L.A. 558sqm
Sevel Village Subd., Daraga
Minimum Bid Price: P 2,300,000.00

UCPB 1141 - RSDL W/ IMPRVMT
L.A. 181sqm
Catleya St., Valdesco Subd., Daraga
Minimum Bid Price: P 694,450.00

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L.A. 725sqm
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UCPB 1143 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 858sqm
Nat'l Rd., Brgy. Arimbay
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L.A. 505sqm
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UCPB 1146 - SUBDIVISION LOTS
L.A. 2,108sqm
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UCPB 1147 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 1,757sqm
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L.A. 600sqm 2 STRY BLDG
Sorano St., Villa Sorabella, Naga
Minimum Bid Price: P 5,670,000.00

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L.A. 5,000sqm
Brgy. Tinangulo, Naga
Minimum Bid Price: P 20,000,000.00

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L.A. 54sqm
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Minimum Bid Price: P 400,000.00

UCPB 1151 - RESIDENTIAL LOT
L.A. 1,500sqm
Brgy San Felipe Naga
Minimum Bid Price. P 900,000.00

UCPB 1152 - COMMERCIAL LOT
L.A. 2,000sqm
Brgy. Mabulo, Naga
Minimum Bid Price: P 9,900,000.00

UCPB 1153 - COMML LOT
L.A. 1,000sqm
Brgy. Mabulo, Naga
Minimum Bid Price. P 7,000,000.00

UCPB 1154 - GAS STATION
L.A. 10,000sqm w/ BODEGA
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UCPB 1155 - RSDL LOT
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Audi blitzkrieg

THE PANGASINAN prosecutor and judge trying the Audi dealership row have careened into a slippery slope, after "wanted" ads and mug shots of the board of directors of the German luxury vehicle manufacturer were published in the INQUIRER.

According to the legal grapevine, the Department of Justice has already relieved the prosecutor, while the Alaminos RTC judge himself is under fire for allowing the case to proceed without the complainants posting the estimated P16 million in filing fees.

No less than German Ambassador Axel Weishaupt bitterly protested the publication of the Wild, Wild, West-style of advertisements against the top Audi top officials, after the Alaminos judge approved the issuance of arrest warrants against the German-based Audi officers.

The series of ads had been placed in the Business section of this paper and paid for by the Auto Prominence Group of Peter and Paul Rodriguez, the disenfranchised distributor and dealer.

The Rodriguezes, who are claiming more than P2.1 billion in damages, insist that the Alaminos court has upheld their right to continue being the sole authorized importer and distributor of Audis in the country.

The German automaker, in turn, says it terminated Auto Prominence's dealership earlier this year—awarding the same to PGA Cars of insurance magnate Robert Coyiuto Jr.—because of unresolved and recurring quality and under-performance issues with its former partner.

Despite being based in Makati, Auto Prominence filed the case in Pangasinan on the strength of a pre-1997 joint venture agreement with Audi to assemble Audi and Volkswagen vehicles in Alaminos town.

The Alaminos venture, as well as Auto Prominence's plan to assemble Malaysian Proton cars, collapsed in the aftermath of the regional currency crisis.

RP proud in Saipan

AFTER nearly two years of bureaucratic entanglement, the Delgados of Islacom fame have finally overcome the remaining regulatory and executive hurdles in their buyout of the Verizon telephone franchise in Saipan, and now expect to take over the island's main telecommunications provider by Sept. 1.

According to the grapevine, Delgado executives Jovino Lorenzo and Rogelio Singson are now in the US Commonwealth territory to complete the due-diligence work preparatory to the $60-million takeover.

Aside from taking over Micronesian Telecommunications Corp., the Delgados plan to transform the telecom company into a regional player.

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

Silverio sandwich

FOR doing his job, Insurance Commissioner Benjamin Santos says he has been caught in the middle of the Silverio family feud, with no less than Bulacan Rep. Lorna Silverio writing Malacañang and asking for his head.

Santos, in reaction to a July 8 item here, said the commission began looking into the affairs of Centennial Insurance, the company chaired by Ricardo Silverio Sr.—husband of the Bulacan congresswoman—after receiving a takeover complaint from Silverio's son, Ricardo Jr.

Moreover, it was two Centennial executives who went to the Insurance Commission to discuss the company's P31.5-million solvency deficiency.

Santos, on the other hand, alluded to the family feud as the "much greater problem" that threatens Centennial.

Money-go-round

- ACCRA this week celebrates the 25th year of its Cebu branch, with the Manila-based partners all flying to and holding their midyear conference in the Queen City of the South for the occasion.
- THE FRANCISCAN Sisters of the Immaculate are profuse in their thanks to the Puyats of Manila Bank in settling their family differences, and allowing the Puyats of Loyola Life to sell out their minority stake in the bank.

The Franciscans, who are building a monastery and chapel in Cebu, have been made the main beneficiaries of the Puyat windfall.

- THE EXTENDED Gaisano family, who operates malls in the Visayas and Mindanao, says their family is in no way related to Jimmy Go, alias Jaime T. Gaisano, whose "wanted" photo appeared in the Business section of the INQUIRER on Friday.

Go, allegedly a Bacolod sugar trader, is facing deportation proceedings in the Bureau of Immigration.

Heard through the grapevine

GOKONGWEI daughter Robina and her husband Perry Pe will go public with the in vitro fertilization procedure that the couple underwent in Singapore, chronicling the physical, emotional, and financial costs of the artificial insemination process in Smart Parenting, the health/family magazine published by sister Lisa Gokongwei.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

Ayalas

From page B1

year.

BPI's parent firm Ayala Corp., with such huge subsidiaries as Ayala Land Inc. and Globe Telecoms, has a market capitalization of P129 billion and is seen to be in a strong position to raise funds for any major acquisition.

Alfred Dy, head of research at stock brokerage CLSA Securities Philippines Inc., said in a recent study: "We believe that BPI has no choice but to make an acquisition to protect its market share. This is especially so given Banco De Oro's aspirations to be one of the top three banks in the country in the medium term."

PNB, once the country's biggest bank controlling 25 percent of the banking system's assets, is now ranked sixth with total assets of about P219 billion as of the first quarter.

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LORENZO SHIPPING COPORATION and its' land-based labor union, the 'Samahang Manggagawa sa Lorenzo Shipping Corporation ", concluded its' Collective Bargaining Agreement last July 11, 2005 at the Jadevine Restaurant. *Seated from left to right:* Mr. Robert Ramos (SMSLSC President), Atty. Edgar Ancheta (DOLE Conciliator), Capt. Romeo L. Malig (LSC President), Atty. Grace V. Ruiz (LSC VP-Administration) and Atty. Jesus Gentiles (SMSLSC Legal Counsel). *Standing from left to right:* Mr.Felicisimo H. Saldaña, Jr. (LSC VP-Logistics & Operations), Ms. Julita M. Valeros (LSC VP-Finance), Mr. Edralin G. Manapsal (LSC VP-Marketing), Mr. Dino C. Diaz (LSC VP-Corporate Planning & Business Dev.) and Ms. Ana Sabrina A. Vigo (LSC HRD Manager).

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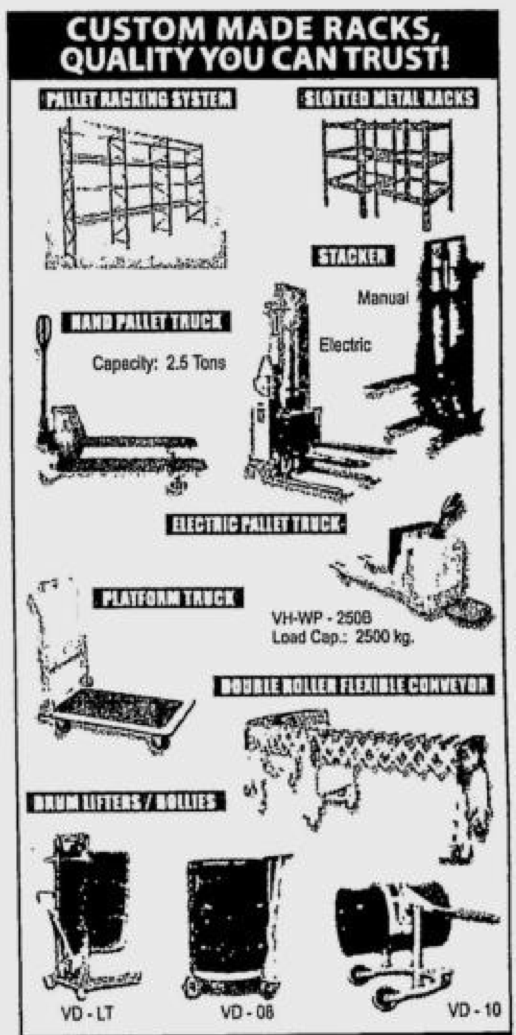

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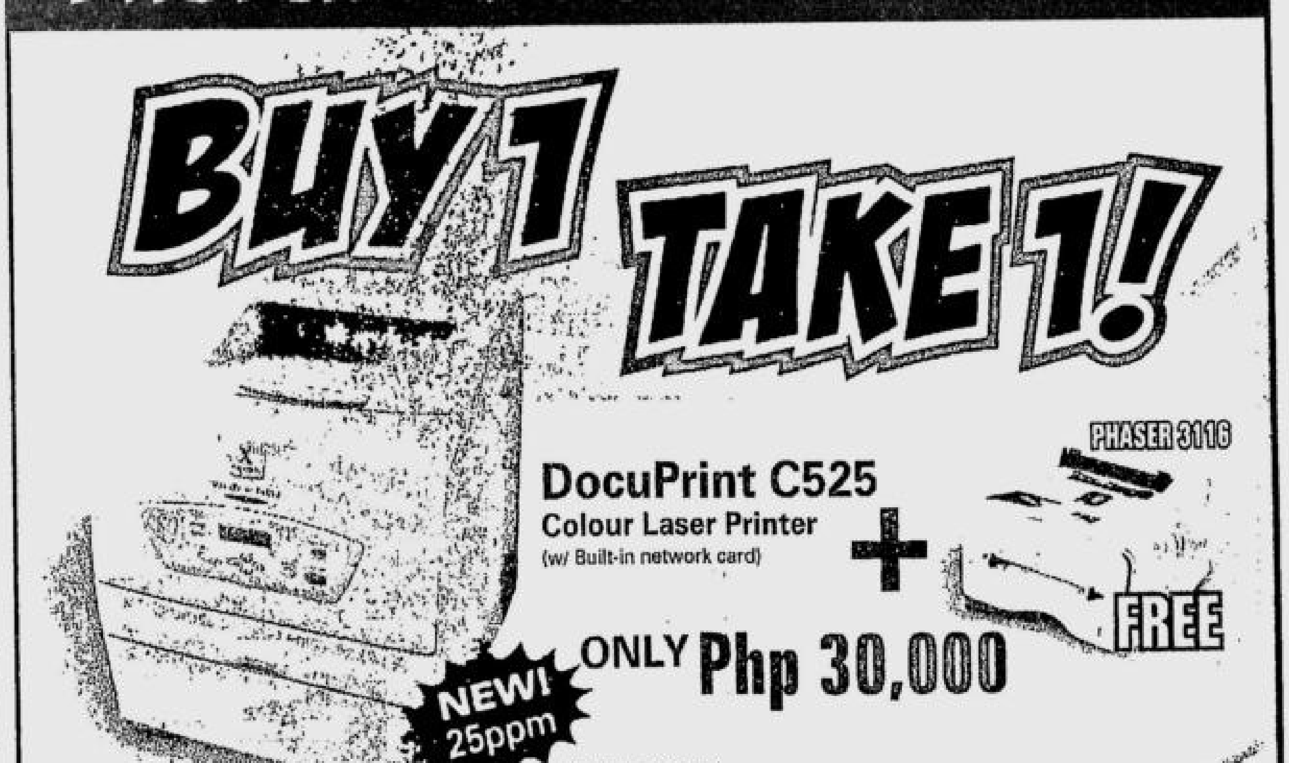

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Sun pushes open source Solaris

By Abigail L. Ho

LIPA City, Batangas—After getting more than 100,000 downloads of the free OpenSolaris since its launch last month, Sun Microsystems Philippines is aiming to further expand its local user and developer base by encouraging the developer community to enhance the operating system.

Sun Microsystems technical consultant Joubert Uriarte said offering the Solaris source code for free to developers would help boost the adoption of the OS.

"First, we have to have people adopt it. Right now, (the user base) is wide enough for Sun as a global company to be earning money. But it's still not wide enough," he said in a briefing here Friday.

The Sun-spearheaded OpenSolaris initiative is a "community development effort where developers from Sun and elsewhere can collaborate on developing and improving operating system technology."

With the project, Uriarte said developers would be able to closely examine the Solaris code, allowing them to make their contributions for the enhancement of the OS.

As it is covered by the Mozilla Public License, he said developers who make improvements on the OS could just make these enhancements proprietary instead of giving these back to the community.

This way, developers could even make money out of studying the code and coming up with improvements for it, he said.

"We just give them the foundation to start on. If (the development) is good, then Sun will probably hear about it and maybe want to buy it and incorporate it with future releases," he said.

"Also, if other vendors get the code and recompile it, then Solaris applications will run on their machines. This may encourage customers to switch to Sun," he added.

Right now, he said the OpenSolaris project really had no commercial value as it entailed offering the source code for free.

However, the expected improvements that could be done to the OS as well as the expansion of its user base would make the project pay off in the end, he said.

The OpenSolaris initiative is actually a come-on for users to run Solaris 10, he admitted.

While both codes were being offered for free, he said Sun did not offer direct support for OpenSolaris, unlike with Solaris 10.

Sun in its official website touts the Solaris 10 as the "most advanced operating system on the planet."

Hackers stage virtual protest vs Ms Arroyo

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

EVEN Filipino hackers have joined calls for President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's resignation.

A hacker group called e-patriots who claim to have hacked Philippine government portal, gov.ph, indicated that it was training its guns on government websites as part of a virtual protest against Ms Arroyo.

A quick check on the zone-h.org, an online repository of defaced websites, however showed that no recent defacements were made against gov.ph.

According to a posting at phackers.org blog, the group that appears to be mere posers is planning to deface government websites until Ms Arroyo steps down.

"Since we could not join the multitude of the Filipino people in the real highways, we decided to bring our fight in the information superhighway. We will continue targeting government and other sites directly affiliated with the bogus President," the group said in an e-mail calling on other hackers to join its cause.

The Anti-Transnational Crime Division (ATCD) of the Philippine National Police Crime Investigation and Detection Group (PNP-CIDG) said it was well aware of the current activities of the underground hacking community.

"We're trying to be as vigilant as possible. We're monitoring their activities to find out if their claims are true," said Nico Fuentes, senior police inspector at the ATCD, in a telephone interview.

Fuentes did not explain how police would prevent attacks on government websites.

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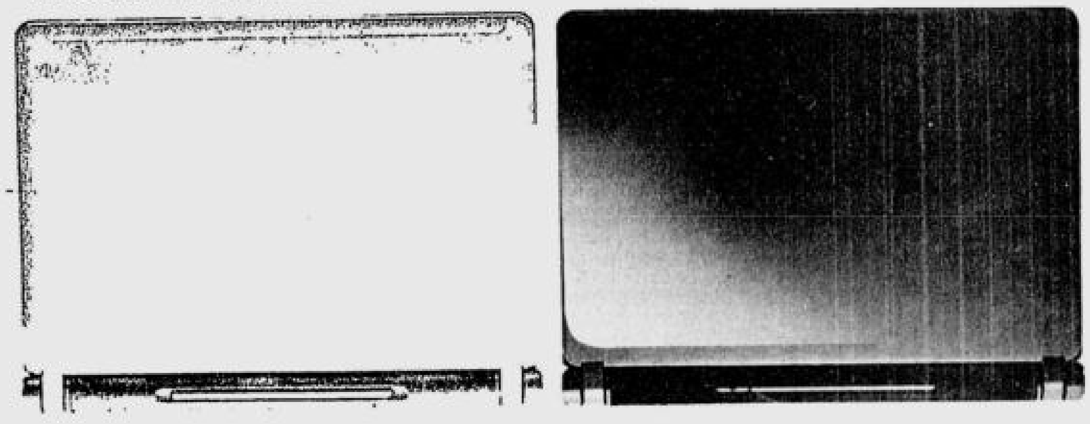

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The LifeBook P7010 is equipped with AuthenTec TruePrint™ Technology that enables accurate fingerprint recognition with a swipe of a finger. Users can now experience hassle-free access to webmails, Internet banking or other Internet log-ons, with secured and authorised access to confidential data and hardware.

Powered by Intel® Centrino™ Mobile Technology, the LifeBook P7010 also allows seamless wireless computing without compromising on security.

Made-In-Japan quality
Recent survey shows that Fujitsu LifeBook had the highest reliability score for a Windows-based notebooks manufacturer.
Source: PC Mag online 17th Annual Reader Satisfaction Survey.

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MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

Morgan Stanley sees slower 4% GDP growth for RP

By Michelle V. Remo

INVESTMENT bank Morgan Stanley expects the Philippines' economic growth to slow down to only 4 percent this year, largely due to weaker exports.

The estimated growth in the country's Gross Domestic Product falls below the government's forecast of 5.3 percent this year.

Morgan Stanley said that while efforts to ease the fiscal woes were showing some success, these would not be enough to offset the falling contribution of the export sector.

The bank noted that government spending remained measly, and that consumption was largely dependent on household spending, which showed strength last year on the back of higher remittances by Overseas Filipino Workers.

"Given the weak economic macro fundamentals of towering prices, high unemployment and reduced government spending on social development projects, the shield provided by these remittances is likely merely to delay the coming economic slowdown, in our view," the bank said in a brief on the Philippines.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING

Please be notified that the Annual Meeting of Stockholders of Petron Corporation will be held on July 25, 2005, Monday at 9:00 a.m. at the Fiesta Pavilion of Manila Hotel, One Rizal Park, Manila, with the following Agenda:

(1) Call to Order
(2) Report on Attendance and Quorum
(3) Review and Approval of Minutes of Previous Annual Stockholders' Meeting
(4) Management Report and Submission of Financial Statements to Stockholders for the year 2004
(5) Ratification of all acts of the Board of Directors and Management during the year 2004
(6) Appointment of Independent Auditor
(7) Election of the Board of Directors for the ensuing term
(8) Such other business as may properly come before it.

The Board of Directors has fixed May 26, 2005 as the record date to determine the stockholders entitled to notice and to vote at said annual meeting.

To facilitate registration, please bring your Notice and any form of identification, i.e., driver's license; Company I.D.; TIN Card; etc. Beneficial owners or those whose shares are held of record by brokers, investment houses, voting trustees, banks, or other entities are advised also to present a notarized confirmation that indeed they are the beneficial owners, indicating the number of shares therefore. Registration starts at 7:00 a.m. and closes at exactly 8:30 a.m. The meeting is expected to end at 11:00 a.m.

(Sgd.) Luis A. Maglaya
Corporate Secretary

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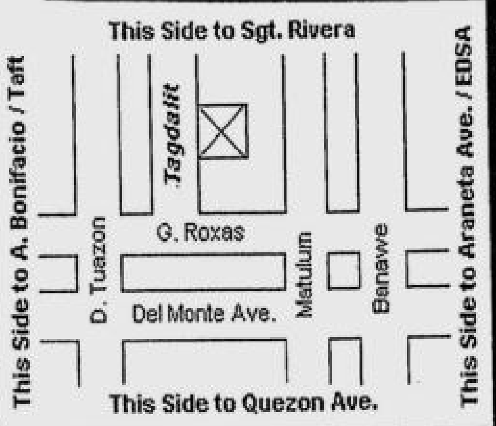

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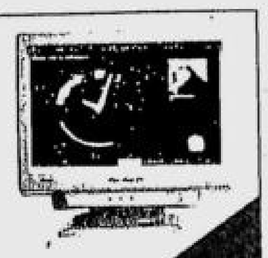

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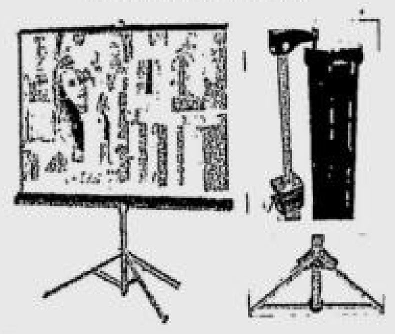
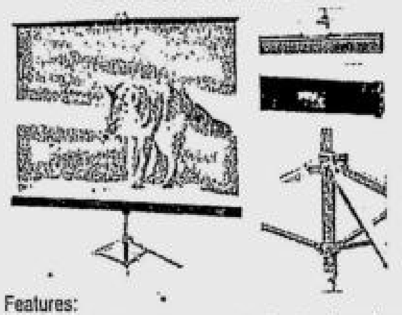


Features:
- Lightweight yet durable
- Case adjusts easily to any level on tripod upright

Screen Size	Special Price
60" x 50" . 4' x 4'	Php 4,799.00
60" x 60" / 5' x 5'	Php 5,399.00
70" x 70" / 6' x 6'	Php 5,999.00

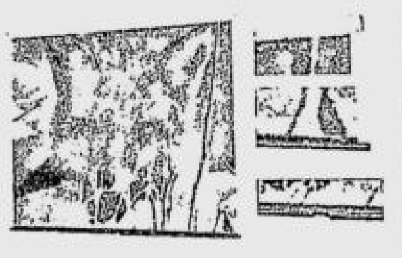
DIPLOMAT (TRIPOD)



Features:
- Exclusive Bell Leg Lock protects the aluminum legs
- Slide locks releases easily for setup
- Suspension slat saddle in all sizes maintains a flat viewing surface Built-in keystone eliminator extends 18". Hidden when not in use.

Screen Size	Special Price
70" x 70" / 5.8' x 5.8'	Php 9,399.00
84" x 84" / 7' x 7'	Php 14,299.00
72" x 96" / 6' x 8'	Php 15,299.00

STAR (MANUAL)



Features:
- Sturdy and durable construction, spring-roller operated
- Matt white offers a sharp image from any viewing angle.

Screen Size	Special Price
50" x 50" / 4' x 4'	Php 2,399.00
70" x 70" / 6' x 6'	Php 2,999.00

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Another "power-packed" promo from ACER unfolds this July

Get a free iPod Shuffle, printer or cell phone with every purchase of an Acer notebook PC

Portability. Smart design. Hi-tech connectivity. Functionality. Now these are just some of the features that any mobile worker is sure to look for in a laptop. Not until today, when affordability and value-for-money have also become major factors that need to be considered!

Acer, one of the world's leading computer brands, has come up with a power-packed promo that is sure to give notebook PC users a chance to save more on their computer purchases this July. Added values in the form of 1-year international traveler's warranty as well as free instant gifts also come with each "power-packed" package!

Fittingly dubbed as **The Acer Power-Packed Promo,** the same runs for a limited time only from July 8 to July 31 and is specifically designed to give more Filipinos a chance to own branded mobile notebooks to suit their needs at a price that's much more affordable than their counterparts in the market.

For the entire duration of the promo, a wide range of Acer TravelMate notebooks will be sold at exceptionally low prices ranging from P49,900 to P99,900.

The range includes Acer's **TravelMate 3002WTCi** that boasts of Intel Pentium M processor 740B, has up to 60GB of HDD, a 4-in-1 card reader, integrated Bluetooth, external DVD/CDRW combo drive and a 12.1" WXGA wide screen color display -- all packed in a lightweight, 1.4 kg. frame. Every purchase of **Acer's TravelMate 3002WTCi** at selected Acer dealers nationwide also comes with a free iPod Shuffle.

There's also **Acer's TravelMate 4002LCi, TravelMate 4101WLCi** and **TravelMate 4651LCi**, all of which use Intel Centrino Mobile Technology that allows for high-tech connectivity and functionality. Each one carries up to 1.6 GHz on 2MB L2 Cache and Intel ProWireless 2200 (802.11b/g), Intel Pentium M Processor 725-730 plus 15" to 15.4" XGA / WXGA / SXGA TFT LCD color monitor. Every purchase of any of these notebooks come with a free Nokia 2600, Nokia 3120, or an iPod shuffle. **TravelMate 4002LCi** and **TravelMate 4101WLCi** also come with a free upgrade to 512MB DDR RAM.

For those with extremely limited budget, there are the Acer **TravelMate 2702 WLM** and the **Aspire 3502WLCi** laptops to choose from. Reasonably priced at just P49,900 and P79,900, respectively, both notebook varieties offer 15.4" WXGA TFT LCD widescreen color display, up to 512MB DDR RAM/40GB HDD and an integrated DVD/CDRW combo or dual drive. Every purchase of the TravelMate 2702WLM comes with a free iPod Shuffle while a free Epson USB C45 printer awaits those who buy Aspire 3502WLCi.

These notebook PCs come installed with Windows XP Home and a built-in 10/100/1000 gigabit LAN/56K modem. Each product in the new **Acer Folio design** comes complete with its own unique feature, such as the **Acer SignalUp Technology** for stronger connectivity and improved wireless perfomance by 20-40%; **Acer eManager** that simplifies hard to access controls and settings; **Acer GridVista** that organizes your work in multi-window format; **Acer CrystalBrite Technology** that makes all images come alive in spectacular, cinematic color and a host of other features that will surely maximize one's computing experience.

For more details about the promo, interested parties may call the Acer Hotline at 815-3388, or visit any authorized distributors of Acer products that are conveniently located all over the country.

Acer recommends Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional.
intel inside
centrino
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POWER-PACKED
MOBILE NOTEBOOKS TO SUIT YOUR NEEDS
Ultraportable
Lightweight (1.4 kg.)
FREE!* iPod Shuffle
Value for Money
FREE!* Epson USB C45 Printer
FREE UPGRADE to 512MB
Smart Design, Hi-Tech Connectivity
Slim and Functional
Dynamic Computing
Smart and Mobile
FREE!* Nokia 2600
FREE!* Nokia 3120
FREE!* iPod Shuffle
FREE!* iPod Shuffle
FREE UPGRADE to 512MB
FREE UPGRADE to 512MB

TravelMate 3002WTCi
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home
- Intel® Centrino™ Mobile Technology
  Intel® Pentium® M Processor 740B
  (1.73GHz, 2MB L2 Cache, 533MHz FSB)
  Intel® 915GM Express Chipset
  Intel® PROWireless 2200 (802.11b/g)
- 512MB DDR 2 RAM/60GB HDD
- 12.1" WXGA Widescreen Color Display with Acer CrystalBrite Technology
- External DVD/CDRW Combo Drive
- Built-in 10/100/1000 Gigabit LAN/56k modem
- Up to 6.5 hours with free 2nd Battery
- 4-in-1 Card Reader / Integrated Bluetooth

SRP: 99,900

Aspire 3502WLCi
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home
- Intel® Celeron® M 360
  (1.4GHz/1MB L2 Cache/400MHz FSB)
- Integrated Ambit Wireless LAN (802.11 b/g)
- 256MB DDR RAM/40GB HDD
- 15.4" WXGA Widescreen Color Display with Acer CrystalBrite Technology
- Integrated DVD/CDRW Combo Drive
- Built-in 10/100mbps LAN/56K Modem

SRP: 49,900

TravelMate 4002LCi
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home
- Intel® Centrino™ Mobile Technology
  Intel® Pentium® M Processor 725
  (1.6GHz, 2MB L2 Cache, 400MHz FSB)
  Intel® 855GME Chipset
  Intel® PROWireless 2200 (802.11b/g)
- 256MB DDR RAM/40GB HDD
- 15" XGA TFT LCD Color Display
- Integrated DVD/CDRW Combo Drive
- Built-in 10/100Mbps LAN/56k modem

SRP: 75,900

TravelMate 4101WLCi
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home
- Intel® Centrino™ Mobile Technology
  Intel® Pentium® M Processor 730
  (1.6GHz, 2MB L2 Cache, 533MHz FSB)
  Intel® 915GM Express Chipset
  Intel® PROWireless 2200 (802.11b/g)
- 256MB DDR RAM/60GB HDD
- 15.4" WXGA TFT LCD (Widescreen)
- Integrated DVD/CDRW Combo Drive
- Built-in 10/100Mbps LAN/56k modem

SRP: 81,900

TravelMate 4651LCi
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home
- Intel® Centrino™ Mobile Technology
  Intel® Pentium® M Processor 730
  (1.6GHz, 2MB L2 Cache, 533MHz FSB)
  Intel® 915GM Express Chipset
  Intel® PROWireless 2200 (802.11b/g)
- 512MB DDR 2 RAM/60GB HDD
- 15" SXGA TFT LCD Color Display
- Integrated DVD/CDRW Combo Drive
- Built-in 10/100/1000 Gigabit LAN/56k modem
- 6 in 1 Card Reader (SD, MMC, MS, Ms Pro, SM, xD-Picture Card)

SRP: 89,500

TravelMate 2702WLM
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home
- Intel® Pentium® 4-3.0E GHz with Intel Hyper-Threading Technology
- 64MB ATI Mobility Radeon 9000 IGP Video
- 512MB DDR RAM/40GB HDD
- 15.4" WXGA TFT LCD (Widescreen)
- Integrated DVD Dual Drive
- Built-in 10/100Mbps LAN/56k modem

SRP: 79,900

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*Promo period: July 8-31, 2005 only.
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Q2 CORPORATE EARNINGS

Consolidation seen to continue

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

ANALYSTS expect the market to continue consolidating this week after a grueling trading performance in the past weeks.

"It's difficult to be overly optimistic about the stock market when there are uncertainties in the country's leadership and the reform (programs). President Arroyo's problems remain a big concern for market players. There has been some relief as President Arroyo was able to stave off calls for her to resign," Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities said.

Vistan said an impeachment process was a more acceptable option for investors at this time.

He said investors were waiting for the second quarter corporate earnings and President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address on July 25.

The listed companies' operational performance during the second quarter are expected to be in line with or better than projections.

"Better-than-expected profits and economic reports should be able to lift share prices from their recent lows. If companies report solid results and give forward guidance, these can build investor confidence and encourage them to put some more money to work," Vistan said.

Last week, the benchmark index grew 20.8 points or 1.1 percent to 1,897.08 on bargain hunting.

BPI Trade said in its weekly report that investors were encouraged by reports that the opposition embraced the path of impeachment to remove President Arroyo from office. Adding to this was the news that the Supreme Court had already heard the oral arguments that sought to prove the constitutionality of the expanded value added tax law.

Last week, the opposition staged a massive rally in Makati to pressure the President to resign.

Analysts, however, said this was not enough to dent the President's resolve not to step down.

"The opposition decided to take the route of impeachment to oust the President from office. Investors viewed this positively since this is a nonviolent alternative and this works within the constitutional framework, "BPI Trade wrote.

President Arroyo last week completed the line-up of her economic team with the appointments of Margarito Teves as finance secretary, Romulo Neri as budget secretary, Peter Favila as trade secretary and Augusto Santos as National Economic and Development Authority director general.

Analysts saw this as a positive development that would ensure that the economic policies and fiscal programs of the government remained on track.

"Investors may also be betting that the constitutionality of the VAT law will be sustained by the Supreme Court based on the arguments that were heard this week. By today, the market has effectively recovered the losses due to the TRO, which suspended the implementation of the VAT law last July 1," the online brokerage said.

The Ayala Avenue rallies

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

I HAVE been holding office at Ayala Avenue since the early 1970s. I have seen all, and I mean all, the rallies staged in Makati's financial district.

I took part in the anti-Marcos rallies that led to the 1986 revolution. Today, my office is just a stone's throw from Paseo de Roxas. I am just an onlooker now. Let me just tell about the last five rallies.

Thursday, June 30. It was a rally of the party-list Partido ng Manggagawa (Labor Party). There were about 1,000 participants. They looked like laborers.

Friday, July 1. At about 3 p.m., I went down. The main body of about 2,000 people (about half of them looked like City Hall employees, the other half were rubber-sandaled squatters) was already at Paseo de Roxas. I met a contingent of about a hundred Erap diehards (mostly squatters) bringing up the rear. At Herrera Street, a jeepney unloaded a dozen squatters. I asked the driver how much were his passengers being paid. He said, "P100 per head." Not bad.

Now, don't get me wrong. A squatter has as much right to be heard as the Forbes Park billionaire. If the squatter earns a hundred bucks for showing up, hurray for him.

At about 5 p.m., I went right through the crowd at the crossing of Ayala Avenue and Paseo de Roxas. The employees had left. There was still a woman haranguing the crowd. But hardly anybody of the squatters who had stayed behind was listening.

Friday, July 8. This rally was supposed to be the knockout blow. At about 4 p.m., I went through the heart of the crowd of about 2,000 employees and squatters. When I came through again one hour later, the speeches were over. The employees were gone. The squatters were milling around. The knockout blow missed.

Tuesday, July 12. I went down at 4 p.m. This was Eddie Villanueva's show. It was like a revival meeting cum rock concert. There were about 2,000 people in yellow T-shirts. I talked to three ladies in their late thirties. They were from Pasig, unemployed, and had come voluntarily at no pay.

Wednesday, July 13. This was the big one. I went down at 3 p.m. and again at 5:30 p.m. I grant there were as many as 50,000 people there as promised by the organizers. Everyone was there: the communists, the city hall employees, the evangelists, and FPJ and Erap diehards. But the hired squatters accounted for at least 80 percent of the crowd.

None of the rallies had the fervor and spontaneity of the anti-Marcos demonstrations of 20 years ago. Now it is all theater, staged for the TV camera and, hopefully, for CNN and BBC. After the cameraman leaves, the rally dies down.

The employees working at Ayala Avenue took active part in the anti-Marcos rallies. Today, they completely ignore the rallies. Hardly anybody takes even a peek from his window. The employees simply stay at their desks.

The evening TV news of the July 1 rally showed a few seconds of a confetti rally against Marcos. ABS-CBN should sack whoever was responsible for the gross misrepresentation.

One thing is certain: on rally day the unemployment rate in Metro Manila is shaved a fractioh of a point.

Who puts up the money to finance these rallies? I estimate a rally costs, on average, a grand total of P500 per head. So, the rally last Wednesday must have cost as much as P25 million. This includes the fees for the entertainers, and the P20,000 paid per performance to the elderly lady rabble-rouser who is a permanent fixture in every rally.

But, as long as the employees working in the financial district stay at their desks, and the residents in the surrounding posh villages do not join, the rallies will come to naught.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of July 15, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	18,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	32	32	31	31.5	217,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	49.5	49.5	48.5	49.5	730,900
China Banking Corp.	760	760	750	750	780
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	600
Export And Ind. Bank Inc.	0.52	0.54	0.52	0.54	840,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	50.5	51.5	50.5	51.5	257,700
International Exch. Bank	18.75	19	18.75	19	216,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	28	28	27.5	27.5	813,800
Philippine National Bank	41.5	42.5	41.5	42.5	12,500
Security Bank Corp.	26	26	26	26	103,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	29.5	29.5	29	29	11,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2760	2760	2760	2760	10
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	300,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1945	1970	1945	1970	1,930
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12.5	12.75	12.25	12.25	31,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.02	1.04	1	1.04	2,142,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	820	835	820	835	11,020
Ipeople Inc.	3.95	3.95	3.9	3.95	32,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.049	0.05	0.049	0.05	1,400,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	15,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.7	3,077,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1550	1550	1525	1525	265,060
Philweb Corp.	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	3,000,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.5	14.75	14.5	14.5	99,000
Manila Electric Co. B	23.5	25	23.5	24.25	1,973,700
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.4	6.5	6.3	6.5	3,634,000
Petron Corp.	3	3	2.95	2.95	2,044,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	333,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.6	7.6	7.6	7.6	2,895,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.64	0.64	0.64	0.64	50,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	50,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	200,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	2.7	3	2.7	3	2,509,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	200,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	55,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	12,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	29.5	30	29.5	30	52,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	31	31.5	31	31.5	471,400
Pancake House Inc.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	1,000
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	400,000
San Miguel Corp. A	61	61.5	61	61	33,800
San Miguel Corp. B	94	94	93	94	89,800
Universal Robina Corp.	16	16.25	16	16.25	1,100
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	6	6	6	6	5,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	41,000,000
Ayala Corp.	295	302.5	295	302.5	109,680
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.9	4.95	4.8	4.9	74,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.025	0.023	0.025	17,800,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.8	1.82	1.8	1.8	773,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	65,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.58	0.67	0.58	0.65	3,310,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	380,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	13,720,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	50,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	310,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.24	360,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.36	2.38	2.34	2.34	1,058,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.06	300,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	6.2	6.3	6.2	6.3	681,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	40.5	41	40	40.5	5,670,500
Global Equities Inc.	0.0725	0.075	0.0725	0.075	6,400,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1	1	1	1	20,000
Ionics Inc.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	24,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.25	3.3	820,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.8	1.82	1.8	1.82	325,000
Medco Holdings	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	10,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.24	1.28	1.24	1.24	4,989,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	590,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	16,290,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	10,000
SM Investments Corp.	232	239	228	238	2,623,380
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.15	0.16	0.15	0.155	1,180,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc	0.19	0.195	0.19	0.195	300,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.82	0.82	0.65	0.65	60,000
Macondray Plastics Inc.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	5,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.46	1.48	1.46	1.46	67,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	10,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.085	0.095	0.085	0.095	700,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Bella Corp.	0.93	0.94	0.92	0.93	14,220,000
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	7.4	7.4	5	5	9,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.12	1,647,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	20,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	50,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	12	12.5	12	12.25	1,314,900
PLDT 10% Pref Series AA	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	9,100
PLDT 10% Pref Series BB	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	...1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.6	21,681,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.86	0.85	0.86	660,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.245	0.245	0.24	0.24	800,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.34	0.35	0.34	0.35	3,560,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.38	1.42	1.38	1.4	11,981,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.175	0.18	0.175	0.18	500,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.42	0.43	0.42	0.43	690,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	200,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.1	7.2	7	7.1	39,686,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	22,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.75	4.9	4.7	4.8	415,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	5,140,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.34	8,810,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	170,400,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.02	73,700,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.006	0.0055	0.006	48,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	20,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.89	0.9	0.88	0.9	7,190,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	29.5	30	29.5	29.5	930,100
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	200,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	29,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	21,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	10,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	5,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	1,000,000

G&W Club Shares
SEC License Broker No. A-1707
FREE PLAYING RIGHTS AVAILABLE As of July 18, 2005
SHARES AVAILABLE

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A	Pls. Call	-
Alta Vista Corp.	-	300,000
Baguio Country Club	Pls. Call	530,000
Calatagan Golf	40,000	-
Camp John Hay	-	140,000
Canyon Woods	125,000	-
Capitol Hills	80,000	-
Cebu Country Club	1,500,000	-
Celebrity Sports	120,000	100,000
City Sports Club Cebu	Pls. Call	-
Club Filipino	Pls. Call	-
Club Filipino De Cebu	-	150,000
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	190,000/250,000*/Pls. Call**	150,000
Eastridge A/B*	Pls. Call	-
Evercrest	65,000	-
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	130,000/200,000*	-
Luisita Golf	350,000	-
Manila Golf Corporate	11,500,000	-
Manila Golf Individual	11,400,000	-
Manila Polo	2,250,000	2,100,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	380,000	370,000/600,000*
Makati Sports Club	200,000	170,000
Metropolitan Club A/B*	120,000/150,000*	-
Mimosa C2/C3*	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Mt. Malarayat A	230,000	160,000
Orchard A/B*/C**	170,000/Pls. Call*/380,000**	150,000/350,000**
Puerto Azul	80,000	-
Punta Fuego	Pls. Call	-
Quezon City Sports Club	150,000	130,000
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	90,000/180,000*/230,000**	-
Riviera Sports	45,000	-
Rockwell Leisure Club	280,000	-
Royale Tagaytay CC	80,000	-
Sherwood A/C**	70,000/180,000**	-
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	1,250,000/1,500,000*	1,100,000
The Palms Country Club	550,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	380,000	-
Tagaytay Highlands	Pls. Call	650,000
Tagaytay Midlands	680,000	-
The Country Club	2,000,000	-
Tower Club	Pls. Call	-
Valley Golf	240,000	-
Valle Verde Ind	120,000	-
Wack Wack Golf	6,500,000	-

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As of July 15, 2005

CLUB	SELLING	BUYING
Alabang Country Club "B"	please call	1.190M
Baguio Country Club	850K	-
Camp John Hay	160K	
Canlubang Golf Club		600K
Canyon Woods	125K	-
Capitol Hills "A"	80K	-
Celebrity Sports Club	118K	-
Club Filipino	90K	
Club Punta Fuego		400K
Eagleridge Golf Club "A"	190K	-
Eagleridge Golf Club "B"	300K	
Eagleridge Golf Club "C"	320K	260K
Forest Hills Golf Club (Individual)	100K	
Makati Sports Club "A"	-	180K
Manila Golf Club (Corp.)		please call
Manila Golf Club (Individual)		please call
Manila Polo Club	2.2M	please call
Manila Southwoods "A"	370K	please call
Manila Southwoods "B"	700K	-
Manila Yacht Club	330K	
Mt. Malarayat "B"	-	200K
Mt. Malarayat "C"	-	280K
Palm Country Club		450K
Quezon City Sports Club "A"	150K	
Riviera Golf Club "B"	-	150K
Riviera Sports Club		60K
Rockwell Club	280K	-
Sherwood Hills "A"	70K	-
Splendido	please call	
Spa & Lodge		450K
Sta. Elena Golf Club "A"	1.2M	
Sta. Elena Golf Club "B"		1.4M
Subic Bay Yacht Club	100K	-
Tagaytay Higlands	750K	
Tagaytay Midlands	860K	650K
Tower Club (Ind)	300K	
Valley Golf Club	230K	
Wack Wack Golf Club	please call	please call

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GG & A Club Shares
SEC License Broker #007575 * As of July 18, 2005

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,100,000	-
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,200,000	-
Baguio Country Club	550,000	520,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	40,000	-
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	50,000
Camp John Hay	180,000	-
Canlubang	550,000	400,000
Canyon Woods	125,000	-
Capitol Hills	80,000	-
Cebu Country Club	1,500,000	-
Celebrity Sports Club	120,000	-
Club Filipino	100,000	-
Eagleridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Forest Hills "A"	130,000	100,000
Forest Hills "B"	200,000	-
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	-
Luisita Golf	350,000	300,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	200,000	165,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	230,000	-
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	11,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	-	11,000,000
Manila Polo	2,200,000	2,100,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	380,000	350,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	680,000
Manila Yacht Club	400,000	330,000
Mimosa (Individual)	-	130,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	-	330,000
Montemar (Corporate)	28,000	-
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	190,000	-
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	300,000	280,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	210,000	170,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	280,000	
Orchard Golf Club "C"	350,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	150,000	130,000
Spa & Lodge	800,000	600,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,200,000	1,000,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,500,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	170,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	100,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	380,000	350,000
Tagaytay Highlands	750,000	650,000
Tagaytay Midlands	680,000	620,000
The Palms Country Club	550,000	500,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	120,000	-
Valle Verde (Corporate)	200,000	-
Valley Golf	240,000	200,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,500,000	6,300,000

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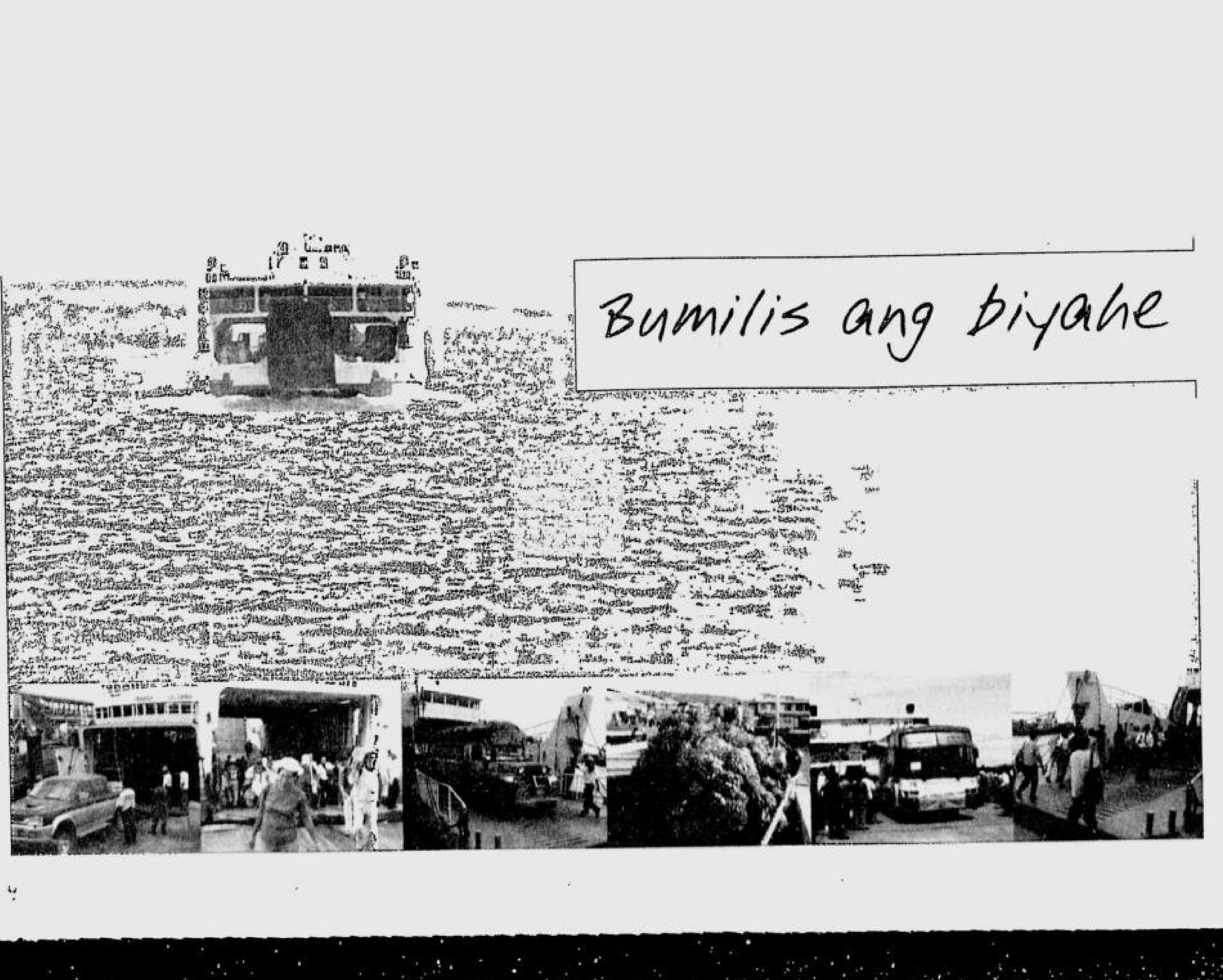

BSP reports fund outflow of $130M in 1week

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas reported a net portfolio investment outflow of $58.7 million during the week following the suspension of the implementation of the expanded value-added tax law.

The BSP report showed that on the week ending July 8, gross outflows reached $130.1 million, wiping out the gross inflows of $71.4 million in the same period.

The Supreme Court suspended the implementation of the VAT law on Friday, July 1. The following Friday, 10 members of President Macapagal-Arroyo's economic team announced their resignation, a development seen to impact on the inflow and outflow of portfolio investments.

Many have expressed concerns that this could be the start of the reversal of the strong foreign portfolio inflows seen early this year. They fear that the shaky political situation might have spoiled what could have been a sustainable turnaround in the country's fiscal dynamics. These concerns were reflected by the "negative" outlook successively given to Philippine sovereign debt by major credit rating agencies Fitch, Standard & Poor's, Moody's and even the Japan Credit Rating.

What tempered the outflows on the day Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima's group quit, foreign exchange and stock market dealers said, was the expectation that this defection would lead to the speedy resolution of the political crisis even if it would mean the ouster of the President. But as the prospects of another "people power" dimmed and with President Arroyo's firm resolve not to resign, the market braces itself up for a prolonged political impasse.

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ng Kaunlaran.

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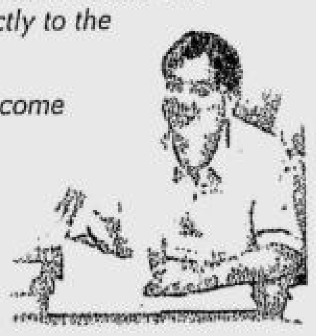
When I assumed company leadership in 1991, we had stiff competition. Of course, there were good times and bad. Always, there was DBP to help see our company through some rough sailing.

When the government thought of developing a nationwide roll-on roll-off ferry and road network, I was among the first in line for DBP financing. We are the first and only marine transportation service provider to link Luzon to Mindanao via inter-island trips utilizing roll-on roll-off and fast craft vessels. Being one of the staunch supporters of the Strong Republic Nautical Highway Project, Montenegro Shipping Lines, Inc. is now recognized as a major Nautical Highway Service Provider.

I believe Montenegro Shipping Lines, Inc., with the help of DBP of course, has helped in a big way to boost travel and trade. Tourism boomed in the area as the Batangas-Mindoro route also connects to the Roxas-Caticlan link, a way to reach the famous Boracay Island. Moreover, the farmers in Mindoro and fisherfolk in Panay are now taking their produce directly to the markets in Manila.

DBP has helped turn my father's legacy into a dream come true for me and MSLI - an industry leader."

- Vicente C. Montenegro, Jr.
General Manager
Montenegro Shipping Lines, Inc.



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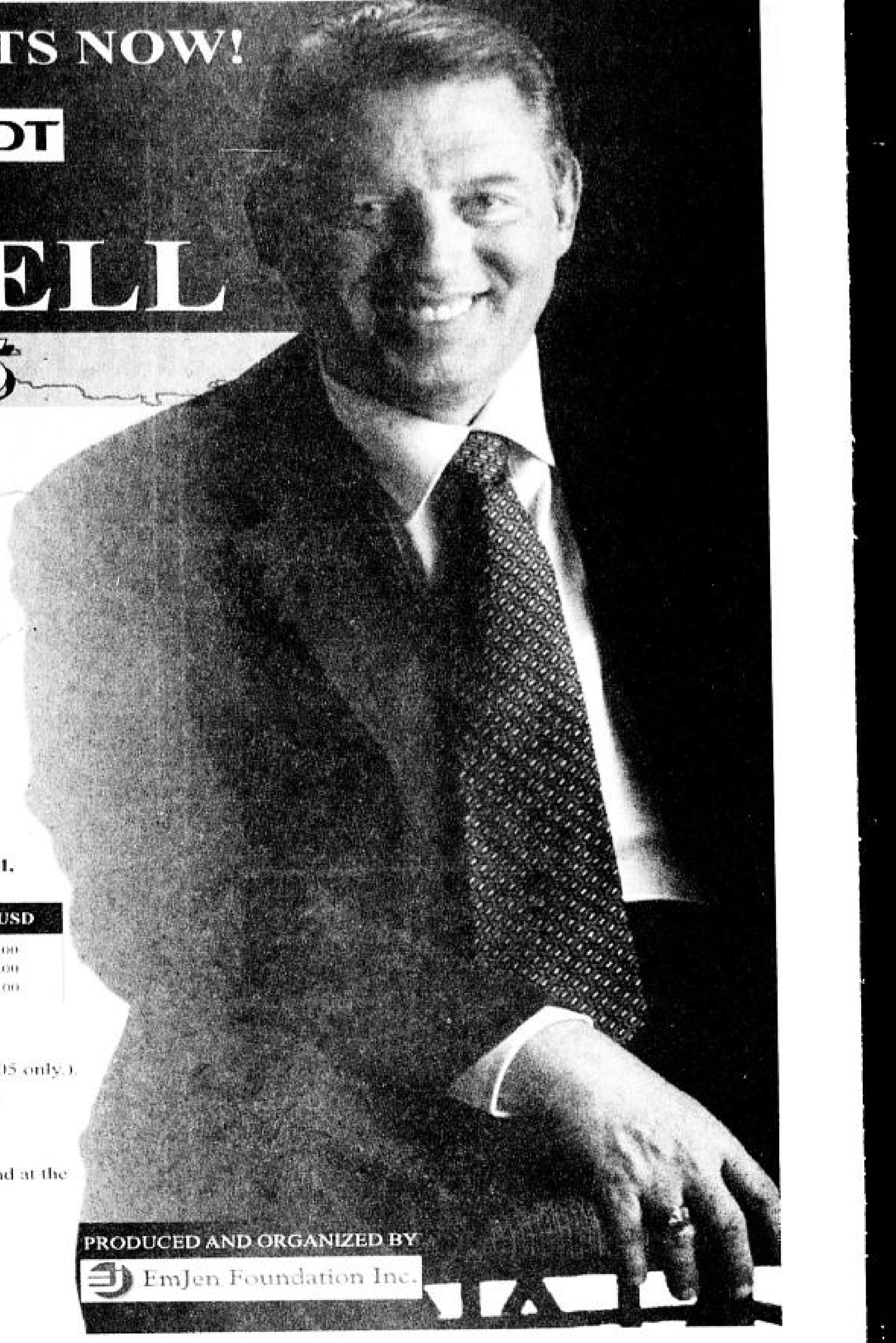

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Friday, July 22, 2005, 6:00PM to 9:30PM, Araneta Coliseum

SEAT CATEGORY	PRICE IN PHP	PRICE IN USD
Patron VIP	PHP 3,500.00	US$ 64.00
Patron	PHP 2,500.00	US$ 46.00
Lower Box VIP	PHP 2,500.00	US$ 46.00
Lower Box	PHP 1,500.00	US$ 28.00
Upper Box A	PHP 1,250.00	US$ 23.00
Upper Box B	PHP 700.00	US$ 13.00
General Admission	PHP 300.00	US$ 6.00

DEVELOPING THE LEADERS AROUND YOU

Saturday, July 23, 2005, 8:00AM to 12:00NN, ALIW Theater, CCP Complex

CATEGORY	PRICE IN PHP	PRICE IN USD
VIP 1	PHP 5,500.00	US$ 100.00
VIP 2	PHP 4,500.00	US$ 82.00
Patron	PHP 3,500.00	US$ 64.00

WINNING WITH PEOPLE

Saturday, July 23, 2005, 1:30PM to 5:30PM, ALIW Theater, CCP Complex

CATEGORY	PRICE IN PHP	PRICE IN USD
VIP 1	PHP 5,500.00	US$ 100.00
VIP 2	PHP 4,500.00	US$ 82.00
Patron	PHP 3,500.00	US$ 64.00

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Republic of the Philippines

ZAMBOANGA CITY SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY

San Ramon, Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

ONE (1) LOT SECURITY SERVICES FOR THE ZAMBOANGA CITY SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY

1. The **Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority**, through the **Corporate Operating Budget CY 2005** intends to apply the sum of **Four Million Six Hundred Twenty-Two Thousand Four Hundred Pesos Only (PhP 4,622,400.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for One (1) **Lot Security Services for the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority/ PR No. 05-07-009**. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening
2. The **Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority** now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for **One (1) Lot Security Services for the Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority**. Delivery of the GOODS is required by One (1) Year. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in the Instructions to Bidders (ITB).
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below on **July 26, 2005 to August 1, 2005** and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of **One Thousand Pesos Only (PhP 1,000.00)**. The method of payment will be Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, or Manager's Check. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative
5. The **Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on **August 4, 2005 at 10:00 AM** at the **Audio Visual Room, 3rd Floor, ZAMBOECOZONE Administration Building, San Ramon, Zamboanga City**.
6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **10:00 AM, August 17, 2005**. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, and Manager's Check and in the amount of **Forty-Six Thousand Two Hundred Twenty-Four Only (PhP 46,224.00)**. GSIS Surety Bond in the amount of **One Hundred Fifteen Thousand Five Hundred Sixty (PhP 115,560.00)** or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
7. Bid opening shall be on **August 17, 2005 at 10:00 AM at the AVR, 3rd Floor, ZAMBOECOZONE Administration Building, San Ramon, Zamboanga City** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
8. The Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority requires the following:

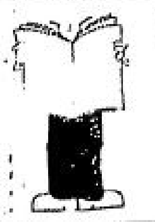
I	Forty (40) Security Guards
II	Firearms, Ammunitions, and Accessories
	6 units M-16 Armalite Rifle 3 units 12 Gauge Shotgun 4 units .38 Caliber Revolver or 9mm Pistol 600 rounds Ammunitions for M-16 Armalite Rifle 150 rounds Ammunitions for 12 Gauge Shotgun 120 rounds Ammunitions for .38 Caliber Revolver or 9 mm Pistol 30 pcs. M-16 Armalite Magazines 3 pcs. 12 Gauge Shotgun Bandolier
III	Communication Equipment
	1 unit VHF Base Radio 13 units VHF Handheld Radio 13 units Fast Charger 13 units back-up Rechargeable Battery Pack
IV	Transportation
	1 unit 4x4 Pick-up Vehicle (4-wheel Drive) 1 unit 155 cc Single Motorcycle (4 strokes)
V	Miscellaneous Equipment
	1 unit Vehicle Inspection Mirror 2 pcs. Portable Metal Detector 40 pcs. Flashlight 40 pcs. Raincoat

Evaluation of Bids will be based on the condition of the firearms, communication Equipment, and transportation offered

9. The Zamboanga City Special Economic Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) GEORGINA PANTALEON-YU
Chairman and Administrator
Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority
Administration Building, San Ramon, Zamboanga City
Tel. No (062) 992-0409, Telefax No. (062) 993-0209
E-mail: Ecozone_bac@yahoo.com

(PDI--July 18 & 25, 2005)



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JOB Market

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Batanes
Municipality of Ivana
OFFICE OF THE BAC CHAIRMAN
Second Agrarian Reform Communities Development Project (ARCDP II)

INVITATION TO BID

July 18, 2005
World Bank/IBRD Loan No. 7152-PH

The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of the *Second Agrarian Reform Communities Development Project (ARCDP II)* and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under contract located in Ivana Cluster ARC, Brgy. Radiwan, Municipality of Ivana, Province of Batanes. The Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the Guideline: Procurement under IBRD Loan and IDA Credits.

The Municipality of Ivana, Province of Batanes and implementing partner of the DLR for ARCDPII invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the ***Construction of 1.30 kms. Sayed – Tunga Farm to Market Road*** under ***Contract No. RIRC 05 093 01 IVA-B.***

Project Duration : 180 Calendar Days
Bidding Documents : PHP 5,000.00
Minimum Bid Security : PhP 123,400.00
Bid Closing Date : September 13, 2005 Time 10:00 P.M.

DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:

Item No.	Scope of Works	Quantity	Unit
10.1	Clearing and Grubbing	5,200.00	sq.m.
10.2	Clearing and Grubbing	329.00	pcs.
12	Roadway & Drainage Excavation	1,303.10	cu.m.
14	Embankment Using Rdway & Drainage Excavation	1,462.00	cu.m
15	Subgrade Preparation	5,200.00	sq.m.
20	Aggregate Sub-Base Course	549.00	cu.m.
21	Aggregate Base Course	133.65	cu.m.
31	Portland Cement concrete Pavement (fc'=3,500 psi)	2,769.00	sq.m.
44	Structural Concrete Class "A" for Spillway	87.40	cu.m.
51 (2)	Rubble Concrete Retaining Wall	224.00	cu.m.

Minimum Equipments Required

Road Grader (1 unit)-owned; Road Roller (1 unit)-owned, Backhoe/Excavator (1 unit); Dump Trucks (2 units)-owned, Water truck (1 unit)-owned; One Bagger Concrete Mixer (2 units)-owned; Portable Plate Compactor (2 units)-owned; survey instruments-owned/leased

A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by the interested bidders at the BAC Secretariat Office of the Municipality of Ivana, Province of Batanes, starting July 18, 2005 from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PhP 5,000.00 for each set. Pre-bid conference will be held in the same address on August 30, 2005 at 10:00 A.M.

Bids shall be valid for a period of 90 days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by a security deposit of PhP 123,400.00 in the form of; **Cash, Certified Check, Manager's Check, Bank Guarantee**, or a free convertible currency, and shall be delivered to the BAC Secretariat Office of the Municipality of Ivana, Province of Batanes, on or before the Bid closing date on September 13, 2005 at 10:00 AM, at which time the Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.

The LGU-BAC ARCDPII of Ivana, Batanes reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or formality, assume no obligation whatsoever to compensate indemnity to the contractor/bidder for any expenses that they may incur in the preparation of bid and to accept the **lowest evaluated, responsive and complying bid.**

(Sgd.) HENRY E. CABUCO
Chairman, LGU BAC-ARCDPII

(PDI – July 18, 2005)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS
LAND TRANSPORTATION OFFICE
East Avenue, Quezon City
E-mail Address: ltombox@lto.gov.ph • Website: www.lto.gov.ph

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 628-2005

7 July 2005

TO : The Regional and Assistant Regional Directors, Head and Cashier of Batac District Office and Employees concerned Regional Office No. 1 San Fernando, La Union

SUBJECT : **COLLECTION OF COMPUTER FEES**

Upon successful completion of the functional and other applicable testing Certificates of Acceptance of an IT Facility (CAIFs) for the modules of the Motor Vehicle Registration System (MVRS), Driver's Licensing System and Revenue Collection System (RCS) were issued for Batac District Office.

Accordingly, in compliance with the applicable User Acceptance Test Plan, you are hereby directed to commence the collection of the computer fee for the MVRS and DLS modules applicable to your respective sites, as follows:

	Computer Fee	VAT	Total
MVRS	P 120.00	P 12.00	P 132.00
DLS	P 48.00	P 4.80	P 52.80

All orders/memoranda in conflict herewith are deemed superseded.

This Memorandum Circular shall take effect after publication in three (3) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

For strict compliance

(Sgd.) ANNELI R. LONTOC
Assistant Secretary

(PDI – July 18, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
National Power Corporation
MAGAT RIVER HYDROELECTRIC PLANT
Brgy. Gen. Aquinaldo, Ramon, Isabela

RE-INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

(3rd Advertisement)

The NPC-Magat Hydroelectric Power Plant (MHEPP) is inviting interested private janitorial and manpower agencies for the SUPPLY OF LABOR, TOOLS/EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES AND SUPERVISION RELATED TO JANITORIAL/LAWN AND GARDEN/LANDSCAPING AND SUPPLY OF TECHNICAL, SKILLED, SEMI-SKILLED, UNSKILLED AND CLERICAL SUPPORT MANPOWER SERVICES for a contract period of two (2) years with an Approved Budget for the Contract of P8,900,000.00.

Applicant(s) who may Apply for Eligibility and to Bid shall meet the following requirements:

1. Duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and/or Department of Trade and Industry (DTI); or
2. Duly registered with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), in case of Cooperative

Complete set of Eligibility and Bid Documents shall be available for issuance starting **July 18 to 29, 2005**, upon submission and presentation of photocopy of SEC/DTI/CDA to the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) c/o the Secretariat, Administration Division between 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM during weekdays and payment of a non-refundable fee of **One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos** (P1,500.00).

Pre-bid Conference and Opening of Bids (Single Stage Bidding) will be on the following dates

Pre-bid Conference
Date *August 05, 2005*
Time *9:00 AM*
Venue *MHEP Conference Room*

Submission & Opening of Bids
Date : *August 18, 2005*
Time : *9:00 AM*
Venue : *MHEP Conference Room*

The determination of eligibility shall be based on the submission of the required documents, utilizing the prescribed forms and using the non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria stated in the IRR of RA 9184.

The bidder with Lowest Calculated Bid will be subject to Post-qualification procedure before an award is made. Bid prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget shall be rejected and returned outright.

(Sgd.) W.R. FERRER
Chairman Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–July 18 & 25, 2005)

National Power Corporation
GEOTHERMAL GENERATION
BAC-MAN GEOTHERMAL POWER PLANT COMPLEX

July 7, 2005

INVITATION TO BID

INTERESTED PARTIES / SUPPLIERS ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PUBLIC BIDDING TO BE CONDUCTED ON August 02, 2005, 2:00 P.M. FOR:

PR#3BAC-05-0248 / PB-05-0412	WORK ORDER Supply / installation of materials in the replacement of DEHC Servomotor for control valves of BM 1 unit # 1 & 2 COST ESTIMATE : Php 1,800,000.00

COPIES OF BID DOCUMENTS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM PROCUREMENT SERVICES ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION, GROUND FLOOR, BAC-MAN GEOTHERMAL POWER PLANT COMPLEX AND MUST BE SUBMITTED ON OR BEFORE August 02, 2005 10:00 A.M.

ALL BIDS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED WITH BID SECURITY IN THE FOLLOWING FORMS:

CASH, MANAGER'S OR CASHIER'S CHECK-ONE (1%) OF THE ABC
2.5% of total ABC issued by the GSIS / PRIVATE SURETY with the following conditions
The bond is a penal and callable on demand
The entire amount shall be forfeited in favor of the oblige upon default of the supplier. Terms printed in the policy form of surety company that is contrary to the intends of the above provisions should be deleted.

PLEASE BE INFORMED THAT A PRE-BID CONFERENCE AND PRE-ELIGIBILITY SCREENING WILL BE ON:

DATE July 22, 2005
TIME 10:00 A.M
VENUE Bac-Man Geothermal Power Plant Complex, Conference Room

IN THIS CONNECTION YOUR PRESENCE OR A NECESSITY IN THE PROCUREMENT PROCESS IS HIGHLY SOUGHT.

FOR FURTHER INQUIRIES PLS. CONTACT BAC SECRETARIAT BMGPP COMPLEX AT (052) 820-3133.

(Sgd.) ROLANDO E. CAWALING
BAC Chairman, BMGPP Complex

(PDI--July 11 & 18, 2005)

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TASTE EXPO

AUGUST 3 (Wednesday- DAY 1)

11:00AM	Halal Cooking with International Chefs by Most Institute
1:00PM	Thai Cooking with BNL Inc.
2:00PM	Culinary Demo by Scanasia Overseas Inc.
3:00PM	**Grand Cocktail Competition with the Philippine Bartender's League (PBL)**

AUGUST 4 (Thursday -DAY 2)

11:00AM	Halal Cooking with International Chefs by Most Institute
1:00PM	Coffeology By Robert Francisco , Boyd Coffee Co.
3:00PM	**Hotel &Restaurant Chefs Association of the Phils. (HRCAP) Market Basket Challenge**
5:00PM	Demo by Asian Bartending Academy

AUGUST 5 (Friday -DAY 3)

11:00AM	Candies &, Marmalade by Spices & Foodmix
1:00PM	Cooking Demo by Mega Sardines
2:00PM	Cooking Demo by MCN Distributors Inc.
3:00PM	**Flairtending Competition with the Philippine Bartender's League (PBL)**

AUGUST 6 (Saturday DAY 4)

11:00AM	**Culinary Competition by Cook**
2:00PM	Culinary Demo of Ajinomoto
3:00PM	Baking Demo of Del Monte Philippines
4:00PM	**Ice Cream Scoopetition by Nestle Philippines**

EXPO REGULATIONS

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.
Seminars strictly on a first-come-first-serve basis.
Pre-registration recommended for seminars with fee.
No one under 16 years old allowed into exhibit hall.
Shorts and slippers not allowed in exhibit hall.
From August 2-6, 2005, you may call Premier Events Plus Group, Inc. at telephone # 551-5224

WORLD FOOD SUMMIT

SEMINAR ROOM A

AUGUST 3 (DAY 1)

11:00AM	**How to Manage Your Catering Business (P300)**
2:00PM	How to Choose a Safe & Roadworthy Truck for Your Business by BSB Group Inc.
3:00PM	Hydrocolloids, stabilizers for baking, food, sauces application by Camden Industries Inc.

AUGUST 4 (DAY 2)

1:00PM	The World Needs Filipino Bartenders by Asian Bartending Academy
3:00PM	A Guide To Metal Detection in the Food Processing and Packaging Industries by Handyware Phils.
4:00PM	**Franchbaker Seminar (with fee)**

AUGUST 5 (DAY 3)

1:00PM	Getting Into the Donut & Ice Cream Business by Handyware Phils.
2:30PM	Sanitation & Preventive Maintenance in the Food Industry by Handyware Philippines
3:00PM	**Fruit & Vegetable Carving by HRCAP (P500)**

AUGUST 6 (DAY 4)

1:00PM	Seminar by Ajinomoto Philippines
2:00PM	**Asian Cuisine &Plating with ISCAHM (P500)**

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SEMINAR ROOM B

AUGUST 3 (DAY 1)

12:00NN	Ensuring the Success of Your Marketing Plan by Josiah Go, President Mansmith & Fielders Inc.
2:00PM	Computerization of Financial & Manufacturing Processes of SMEs by ABM Computech
3:00PM	All About Franchising by RK Franchise Consultancy

AUGUST 4 (DAY 2)

1.00PM	J Channel Ingredients Workshop/Seminar on Meat Processing

AUGUST 5 (DAY 3)

12:00NN	HACCP Seminar by Certified International
1:00PM	Halal..........Designing the Future of Food Industry by Most Institute
3:00PM	From Pantry to Party (How to Equip Your Catering Business by Micheal Yu of Sunnex
4:00PM	Proper Handling of LPG by Petron Gasul Corp.

AUGUST 6 (DAY 4)

1:00PM	Live Life Better.....Healthy Weight Management by Mind, Body & Soul
2:00PM	Getting Into the Cart Business by Sam's Balls Inc.
3.00PM	Success Secrets of Chinese Traders by Chefs Pride
4:00PM	How to Start a Meat Processing Plant

PRESENTED BY:
GASUL

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Republic of the Philippines
ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Pilar St., Zamboanga City

INVITATION TO BID

The **ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT (ZCWD)** is inviting Interested Licensed Supplier of Bottling Equipment to submit bids for the following:

PR/JO NO.	DESCRIPTION
7797	Supply and Installation of Water Treatment and Bottling Equipment for Mineral Water Approved Budget Cost: P3,000,000.00

Interested Licensed Supplier of Bottling Equipment may obtain *Bid Forms and Detailed Specifications* at the BAC Secretariat, 3/F ZCWD Main Bldg., Pilar Street, Zamboanga City upon payment of a minimal non-refundable fee of P2,000.00. Issuance on Bid documents will be on July 11 to 12, 2005 only. After these dates the BAC Secretariat will no longer issue any bid documents.

Suppliers must submit the following documents for eligibility check on or before July 25, 2005, to qualify for bidding:

A. Legal Documents
   1. A copy of the Department of Trade & Industry Certificate of Registration of Business Name or Security & Exchange Commission Certificate, whichever may be appropriate under existing laws of the Philippines.
   2. Valid and current Mayor's Permit/Municipal License. In cases, where Mayor's Permit/Municipal License is still being renewed, a Certification from Licensing Division that such a permit is still being processed.
   3. Taxpayer's Identification Number
   4. Statement from Bidder that it is not "Blacklisted" or barred from bidding by the government or any of its agencies, offices, corporations or LGUs, including non-inclusion in the consolidated Blacklisted Report issued by the GPPB as provided in Section 69.4 of IRRA-A, R.A. 9184.
   5. Letter of Intent from the prospective bidder to participate in the bidding.
   6. The prospective bidder or its duly authorized representative shall certify that each documents submitted is an original copy of a true and faithful reproduction of the original.
   7. Other Documents as may be required.

B. Technical Documents
   1. Statement of the prospective bidder of all its on-going and completed government and private contracts within the relevant period, where applicable, including contracts awarded but not yet started, if any. The statement shall state for each contract whether said contract is:
      a. Ongoing, Completed or Awarded but not yet started: within the relevant period, where applicable. The statement include, for each contract, the following:
         The Name of the Contract;
         Date of Contract;
         Amount of contract and value of outstanding contracts;
         Date of Contract Started;
         End user's acceptance, if completed; and
         Specification whether prospective bidder is a manufacturer, supplier or distributor; or
      b. Similar or not in nature and complexity to the contract to be bid.

C. Financial Documents
   1. The prospective bidder's audited financial statements, stamped "received" by the Bureau of Internal Revenue or its duly accredited and authorized institutions, for the immediately preceding calendar year, showing among others, the prospective bidder's total and current Assets and Liabilities; and
   2. The prospective bidder's computation for its Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC), which shall be in accordance with Section 23.11 or IRR-A, RA 9184 or a commitment from a licensed bank to extend to it a credit line if awarded the contract to be bid, or a cash deposit certificate, in an amount not lower than that set by the procuring entity in the Bidding Documents, which shall be at least equal to ten percent (10%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid.

Pre-bid Conference: July 25, 2005
2:00 PM AT THE 2/F, ZCWD MAIN BLDG.,
PILAR ST., ZAMBOANGA CITY
Submission of Bids August 1, 2005
2:00 PM AT THE 2/F, ZCWD MAIN BLDG.,
PILAR ST., ZAMBOANGA CITY

(Sgd.) ALEJO S. ROJAS, JR.
BAC 2 Chairman

(PDI-July 18, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
Fifth Judicial Region
Branch 40
Daet, Camarines Norte

IN THE MATTER OF CANCELLATION OR CORRECTION OF ENTRY IN THE LOCAL CIVIL REGISTRY AND CHANGE OF NAME OF MELANIE HANTAL STIBICK/KATRINA GRABADOR TO KATRINA GRABADOR; **SPL. PROC. NO. 1357**

MELANIE HANTAL STIBICK/KATRINA GRABADOR, assisted by her guardian MARIANO EBRON SAMONTE,
Petitioner,

- *versus* -

CIVIL REGISTRARS OF MERCEDES, CAMARINES NORTE and SILINOAN, LAGUNA and ROQUE SAMONTE,
Respondents.

ORDER

Petitioner Melanie Hantal Stibick/Katrina Grabador is a minor and is represented by her guardian Mariano Ebron Samonte. Carmelita Cadian Hantal was married to Moises Grabador and they begot a child named Melania Hantal Grabador who was born on May 16, 1977. When Moises died, Carmelita married an American surnamed "Stibick". From then on, Carmelita and Melania began using the surname Stibick. When they went to the US, Melania was enrolled with the Social Security System as Melania Hantal Stibick on the belief that her surname automatically became Stibick when her mother Carmelita married the American. Later on, Melania went back to the country and on November 15, 1994, she gave birth to petitioner at Siniloan, Laguna, out of wedlock and of unknown father. However, petitioner was erroneously registered with the LCR of Siniloan, Laguna as Melanie Hantal Stibick on the belief that petitioner could also use the surname Stibick inasmuch as the petitioner's mother Melania is Stibick. In 1997, when Melania went back to America, she trusted the petitioner to herein guardian. The situation became more complicated when in February, 2002, a certain Roque Samonte registered petitioner anew with the LCR of Mercedes, Camarines Norte as Katrina Grabador. It was made to appear that the father of petitioner is Roque Samonte and she was born on November 7, 1994. Since then, petitioner is using the name Katrina Grabador. Since the petitioner is an illegitimate child, she should bear the correct surname of her mother-Grabador. Inasmuch as the entries in her Certificate of Live Birth are inaccurate, those entries must be cancelled. The foregoing is necessary to establish the real identity of the petitioner, to protect her from further emotional suffering brought about by confusion in her identity and to eliminate any legal obstacle. She prayed that: (1.) her name be changed to Katrina Grabador; and (ii.) it be accordingly entered with the civil registry that she is the daughter of Melania Hantal Grabador (now Melanie Hantal Stibick) and was born out of wedlock with unknown father in Siniloan, Laguna on November 15, 1994.

Finding the petition to be sufficient in form and in substance, the same is given due course. Set the initial hearing of the petition on August 12, 2005 at 8:30 a.m. and giving notice to anyone who may have objection hereto to file their opposition on or before the date of initial hearing.

Let a copy of the order be published at the petitioner's expenses in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks before the date set for initial hearing Notify all the parties concerned.

SO ORDERED.

Given this 24th day of June, 2005 at Daet, Camarines Norte.

ROLANDO M. PANGANIBAN
Presiding Judge

(PDI--July 18, 25 & Aug. 1, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
National Capital Judicial Region
METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURT
City of Makati, Branch 67

MECHANICAL HANDLING EQUIPMENT CO., INC.,
Plaintiff,

- *versus* -

ANTHONY C. FLORES,
Defendant.

ORDER

The Motion to Serve Copy Of Decision By Publication filed by the plaintiff, through counsel, is GRANTED.

The Branch Clerk of Court is directed to comply with the provisions of OCA Circular No. 5-2002.

SO ORDERED.
City of Makati, June 3, 2005.

RICO SEBASTIAN D. LIWANAG
Presiding Judge

— oOo —

Republic of the Philippines
National Capital Judicial Region
METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURT
City of Makati, Branch 67

MECHANICAL HANDLING EQUIPMENT CO., INC.,
Plaintiff,

- *versus* -

ANTHONY C. FLORES,
Defendant.

DECISION

The instant Complaint is for a Sum of Money filed on 25 April 2003 by plaintiff Mechanical Handing Equipment Co. Inc. against defendant Anthony C. Flores.

On 24 July 2003, for failure of defendant Anthony C. Flores to file an Answer within the reglementary period, he was declared in default and plaintiff was allowed to present its evidence ex-parte.

Accounting Department Head Gloria Elizabeth Tolentino and Vice –President for Finance and Administration Veronica L. Co testified[1] that defendant Anthony C. Flores was a former Sales Supervisor assigned at plaintiff's branch office in Cebu City.[2] Upon plaintiff's investigation, it was found out that as Sales Supervisor, he made cash advances, used company funds and received payments from clients worth P255,993.00 which he failed to remit and remained under his account.[3] On 17 March 2003, he resigned without having remitted said amount, however, acknowledged his indebtedness to plaintiff and promised to settle it.[4] Nevertheless, he failed to comply such that a demand letter dated 05 April 2003 was sent to him but to no avail.[5] To protect its interest, with the claim remaining unsettled, plaintiff instituted the present suit claiming said amount plus P100,000.00 as other damages, legal interest, Attorney's fees and cost of suit.

By preponderance of evidence, plaintiff was able to prove its cause of action against defendant Anthony C. Flores. The latter is liable to pay the former P255,993.60 plus interest rate of 12% per annum from 20 March 2003 until fully paid. Inasmuch as plaintiff was constrained to resort to judicial action to protect its interest, Attorney's fees is awarded which is set at a reasonable amount of P10,000.00. the cost of suit is also properly chargeable against defendant.

WHEREFORE, judgment is rendered declaring defendant Anthony C. Flores liable to pay plaintiff Mechanical Handling Equipment Co., Inc. the following amounts:

1. P255,993.60 plus interest of 12% per annum from 20 March 2003 until full payment;
2. P10,000.00 as Attorney's fees; and
3. Cost of suit.

SO ORDERED.
Makati City , 02 April 2004.

EVELYN S. ARCAYA-CHUA
Pairing Judge

(PDI--July 18, 25 & Aug. 1, 2005)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
BUTUAN CITY WATER DISTRICT
Gov. Jose A. Rosales Avenue, Butuan City
Telephone # (085) 342-3145/46
Fax # (085) 341-5008; 8151268
Email address: bcwd2@skyinet.net

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Butuan City Water District hereby invites suppliers and distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid, in accordance with I.R.R. of R.A. 9184, for the supply and delivery of Water Meters:

Qty.	Items/Description
7,420 pcs.	Water Meter Assembly, ½" ø Non-Reversible Reading

Approved Budget: Php 4,900,000.00

Interested applicants shall submit to the BAC Secretariat, during its business hours, five (5) pieces Water Meter Assembly samples which shall be subjected to Calibration and Endurance Tests upon payment of Testing Fee of Php850.00. Deadline for submission of samples shall be on August 5, 2005. Only applicants duly notified that their samples passed the test shall be qualified to purchase bidding documents and participate in the bidding.

Specifications, details and bidding documents are available to qualified applicants upon payment of non-refundable fee of Php 2,000.00 from date of notification until the morning of August 15, 2005 at the BAC Secretariat during its business hours. Bid documents sent by mail or forwarder upon request of the applicants not received on time shall not be the responsibility of the Bids and Awards Committee.

Pre-bid Conference shall be held on August 15, 2005 at 2:00 P.M. BCWD Time at the Training Hall of BCWD Administration Building. Submission and opening of sealed bids shall follow on August 29, 2005 at the same time and venue.

Butuan City Water District reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defect or formality therein, to assume no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids, and to accept the offer most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd) JORGE L. GUDUYO, C.E.
Chair, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI-July 18 & 25, 2005)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that BOI Certificate of Registration No. EP 92-283 issued on 21 September 1992 as New Export Producer of Cut Flowers (Anthuriums) under the name of NORKIS GROUP MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS INC. was lost.

(PDI-July 18, 2005)

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HOME DEVELOPMENT MUTUAL FUND

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Pag-IBIG Fund, through its Bids and Awards Committee - Information Technology Resources (BAC-ITR), invites qualified suppliers/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder projects:

Item No.	Name of Projects (Description)	Approved Budget for the Contract	Cost of bid Documents (Non-Refundable)
I	Supply and Delivery of various Computer Peripherals		
	CATEGORY I - PARTS (Re-Bidding)	P 2,429,554.00	P 500.00
	CATEGORY II - EQUIPMENT	P 592,900.00	
II	Supply and Delivery of various Intel Based Servers	P 21,029,000.00	P 4,500.00
III	Document Scanning Project	P 2,000,000.00	P 500.00

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last three (3) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bid Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

	ACTIVITIES					
Item No.	Issuance of Bid Documents	Pre-Bid Conference	Opening of Bids (tentative)	Bid Evaluation	Post-Qualification	Notice of Award
I	July 18, 2005	Aug. 4, 2005 1:30 p.m.	Aug. 18, 2005 1:30 p.m.	Aug. 19, 2005	Aug. 31, 2005	Sept. 16, 2005
II	July 18, 2005	Aug. 5, 2005 1:30 p.m.	Aug. 19, 2005 1:30 p.m.	Aug. 22, 2005	Sept. 1, 2005	Sept. 19, 2005
III	July 18, 2005	Aug. 11, 2005 1:30 p.m.	Aug. 25, 2005 1:30 p.m.	Aug. 26, 2005	Sept. 7, 2005	Sept. 23, 2005

Eligibility Requirements, Terms of Reference and Bid Forms may be obtained from the Procurement Section, General Services 7th floor, Atrium of Makati Condominium, Makati Avenue, Makati City.

Pre-Bid Conference, Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Opening of Bid Proposals shall be conducted at Room 602, 6th Floor, Pag-IBIG Fund Multi-Purpose Hall, The Atrium of Makati Condominium, Makati Ave., Makati City.

The Pag-IBIG Fund reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any informality or accept such bids as may be considered advantageous to the government. Further, the Fund assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for expenses or losses that may be incurred in participating in this bidding.

For further inquiries and/or information, please call Messrs. Carlos A. Latorre, Jose Maria M. Diaz or Cesar V. Racoma at 811-42-62, 894-58-15 or visit our Corporate Website at http://www.pagibigfund.gov.ph or e-mail us at hdmfgpis@info.com.ph.

(Sgd.) ATTY. OBERLIN L. PASTORES
Vice President, Legal and General Counsel Group
Chair, BAC - ITR

(PDI--July 18 & 25, 2005)

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ANNOUNCEMENT

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LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late FLORDELIZA R. ARMEA was extrajudicially settled with waiver on May 6, 2005 per Doc. No. 421, page No. 85, Book No. II, Series of 2005 of Notary Public Atty. Jose Perlas of City of Manila. (PDI - July 11, 18 & 25, 2005)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE

INVITATION TO SUBMIT OFFERS

The Privatization and Management Office (PMO) is offering for sale, on an **"as-is, where-is"** basis, the following asset formerly belonging to Carruf Development Corporation:

Description	Indicative Price
Land (1,504 sq.m.) located at Maytubig St., Malate, Manila	P 19,552,000.00

Sealed offers will be received on 27 July 2005, 3:00 p.m. and immediately thereafter, the offers shall be opened and tabulated in the presence of the offerors at the PMO Conference Room, 6th floor, Privatization and Management Office, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties are advised to deal directly with the PMO Marketing Department. Authenticated Offer for Sale documents, together with the Asset Specific Catalogue, may be secured from PMO for a nominal fee of P500.00.

For inquiries, please contact Ms. Shayne J. Monasterio at telephone numbers 817-6331 or 892-2145.

(PDI--July 16, 17 & 18, 2005)

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

❶ Copy of Death Certificate

❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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"I am the resurrection and life. He who believes in Me will live, Even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die." — **John 11:25-26**

In Loving Memory of

AUGUSTO M. BARCELON

who passed on to Eternal Life
on July 18, 2004

His family requests their friends and the pious readers
to join them in their prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

Holy Masses will be offered on July 18, 2005 at the following churches:

Monasterio de Sta. Clara .... 6:00 a.m.
C5 Katipunan Avenue, Quezon City

St. Joseph's Convent of Perpetual Adoration (Pink Sisters) .... 6:00 a.m.
No. 71 Hemady Avenue corner 11th Street, Quezon City

St. Francis Church .... 6:30 a.m.
Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City

Mt. Carmel Church .... 7:00 a.m.
Quezon City

Santuario de San Antonio Church .... 12:00 p.m.
Forbes Park, Makati City

Medical City Chapel .... 12:00 p.m.
Everyday mass at 12:00 p.m. for nine days

Sta. Maria Stella Aurentis Church .... 12:05 p.m.
CRC Amber Avenue, Pasig City

Shrine of Mary, Queen of Peace .... 5:30 p.m.
EDSA corner Ortigas Avenue, Pasig City

San Rafael Church, Marinduque .... 6:00 a.m.

Cennacle House, Davao City .... 7:00 a.m.

Death Notices

ENGR. REYNALDO A. MENDIOLA

(February 9, 1934 – July 13, 2005)
His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City
Interment will be on Tuesday, July 19, 2005.

— oOo —

SALUSTIANA REYES-FLORES

June 28, 1926-July 13, 2005
*Peacefully joined our Creator, parents – **Adriano and Petrona**, sister – **Belen***
Her remains lie in state at Bethany Chapel, Rizal Funeral Homes, Libertad, Pasay City.
Interment will be on July 20 after the 8 a.m. Mass at Manila North Cemetery.

"The Lord is my Shepherd,
There is nothing I shall want." **Ps 23**

SERAPIO "GABBY" CRUZ GABRIEL

*Peacefully joined our Lord and his wife, **Ma. Lourdes Tirona Gabriel** at the age of 70 on July 15, 2005.*

His bereaved children, **Ricky & Abby, Maricar** and **Pia**; sister **Girlie**; in-laws **Jess & Gertie, Willy & Tetta, Dory & Liza, Tinong & Norma** and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, July 20, 2005 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City after the 7:30 a.m. Mass at the Arlington Chapels.

ISABELO S. CHIOCO

Peacefully joined his Creator and wife Virginia on July 15, 2005 at the age of 83.

His loving children **Johnny** and **Carmen**, **Danilo** and **Lulu**, **Ernesto** and **Nida**, **Marivin** and **Alex**; grandchildren **Bryan**, **Michael** and wife **Jessica**, **Michelle**, **Daniel**, **Emmanuel**, **Bullitt** and **Pappish**; great grandchildren **Michael** and **Richard**, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the San Lorenzo Ruiz Chapel of St. Peter Memorial Chapels at Quezon Avenue near corner Scout Chuatoco, Quezon City.

Interment will be at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City on the 20th of July- Wednesday after the 9:00 a.m. Holy Mass at the Holy Family Parish, Roxas District, Quezon City.

CLASSIFIEDS

Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE SALE OF VARIOUS SUBTRANSMISSION LINES/ASSETS WITHIN THE FRANCHISE AREA OF NEGROS OCCIDENTAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (NOCECO)

ERC CASE NO. 2005-225 MC

NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION (TRANSCO)
Applicant
x-------------------x

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

Notice is hereby given of the filing by applicant National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO) on April 28, 2005 of an application for the approval of the sale of various subtransmission lines/assets within the franchise area of Negros Occidental Electric Cooperative, Inc. (NOCECO), docketed as ERC Case No. 2005-225 MC.

The Commission has set the application for hearing on August 4, 2005 at ten o'clock (10:00 A.M.) in the morning at the ERC Hearing Room, 15th Floor, Pacific Center Building, San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

All interested parties who may wish to comment on or oppose the said application should file their comments and/or oppositions on or before the date of hearing. Such parties who may wish to have the details of the application and who shall have manifested to the Commission their desire and intention to participate actively in the proceedings, may request that before the date of hearing, they be furnished with copies of the application by the applicant, which is hereby directed to furnish the parties making such request with copies of the application and its attachments. Likewise, any such interested party may examine the application and other pertinent records filed with the Commission during the usual office hours.

WITNESS, the Honorable **RODOLFO B. ALBANO, JR.**, Chairman, and the Honorables **JESUS N. ALCORDO, RAUF A. TAN** and **ALEJANDRO Z. BARIN**, Commissioners, Energy Regulatory Commission, this 4th day of July 2005 at Pasig City.

MARIA TERESA R. CASTAÑEDA
Executive Director

(PDI – July 18, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF THE STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE AND COMPLIANCE PLAN TO THE PHILIPPINE GRID CODE PURSUANT TO THE PROVISION OF R.A. 9136

ERC CASE NO. 2003-326

NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION (TRANSCO)
Applicant
x-------------------x

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

Notice is hereby given of the filing by applicant National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO) on June 10, 2003 of an application for approval of the Statement of Compliance and Compliance to the Philippine Grid Code pursuant to the provision of Republic Act No. 9136.

The Commission has set the application for hearing on **July 26, 2005** at two o'clock (2:00 P.M.) in the afternoon at the ERC Hearing Room, 15th Floor, Pacific Center Building, San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

All interested parties who may wish to comment on or oppose the said application should file their comments and/or oppositions on or before the date of hearing. Such parties who may wish to have the details of the application and who shall have manifested to the Commission their desire and intention to participate actively in the proceedings, may request that before the date of hearing, they be furnished with copies of the application by the applicant, which is hereby directed to furnish the parties making such request with copies of the application and its attachments. Likewise, any such interested party may examine the application and other pertinent records filed with the Commission during the usual office hours.

WITNESS, the Honorable **RODOLFO B. ALBANO, JR.**, Chairman, and the Honorables **JESUS N. ALCORDO, RAUF A. TAN** and **ALEJANDRO Z. BARIN**, Commissioners, Energy Regulatory Commission, this 3rd day of June 2005 at Pasig City.

MARIA TERESA A.R. CASTAÑEDA
Executive Director III

(PDI – July 18, 2005)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

NOTICE OF SALE THRU AUCTION

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce to all Interested Farmer's Organizations (FO's), Retailers and other interested NFA licensed wholesalers/millers that NFA will be accepting sealed offers for the Sale thru Auction of 100,000 MT or 2.0-Million bags 15% brokens Imported Rice 2005 Arrivals

PARTICULARS	VOLUME (IN MT)		INDICATIVE PRICE
Farmer's Organizations	20,000	Ex-vessel	P 970.00/bg
Retailers	20,000	Ex-warehouse	P 1,010.00/bg
Open to all interested buyers	60,000		

The pre-auction conference and auction proper shall be conducted simultaneously in Manila, Cebu City and Davao City at 10:00 AM on the following date and venue:

Venue	Contact Person	Pre-Auction Conference	Auction Proper
NFA Davao Office Sta. Ana Ave., Davao City (for Mindanao bidders)	Ms. Dianne Silva Tel. # (083) 554-3200 Tel. # (082) 227-4166	July 20, 2005	July 22, 2005
NFA Cebu Office Gov. M. Cuenco Ave., Banilad, Cebu City (for Visayas and Reg IX bidders)	Mr. Piolito Santos Tel # (032) 232-1939 Tel # (032) 232-6832	July 20, 2005	July 22, 2005
FDC, FTI Compound Taguig, Metro Manila (for Luzon bidders)	Ms. Espie Tecson Tel # 712-1708 Tel # 712-1572	July 20, 2005	July 22, 2005

All interested bidders/buyers are required to submit the following documents:

a. Original and xerox copy of NFA license (retailing, wholesaling and/or milling)
b. In case of representative, a duly notarized authorization from the owner, partner, chairman or president that he or she is authorized to represent the business entity in the pre-auction/auction proper and all activities thereto.
c. Offer must be accompanied by Bid Bond equivalent to 10% of the volume bidded in the form of Cashier's or Manager's check payable to NFA issued by a reputable commercial bank in Metro Manila

Interested bidders may secure the Terms and Conditions starting July 20, 2005 at the aforementioned venues from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. For any inquiries, interested bidders can call the above-mentioned contact persons.

Bid documents will be available during the pre-auction conference to qualified bidders/offerors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,500 for FO's/retailers and P3,000.00 for other interested bidders (wholesalers/millers).

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality thereof, and to accept only such bids that are advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) CONRADO DL. IBAÑEZ
Assistant Administrator and
Chairman, Disposition Committee

(PDI – July 16 & 18, 2005)

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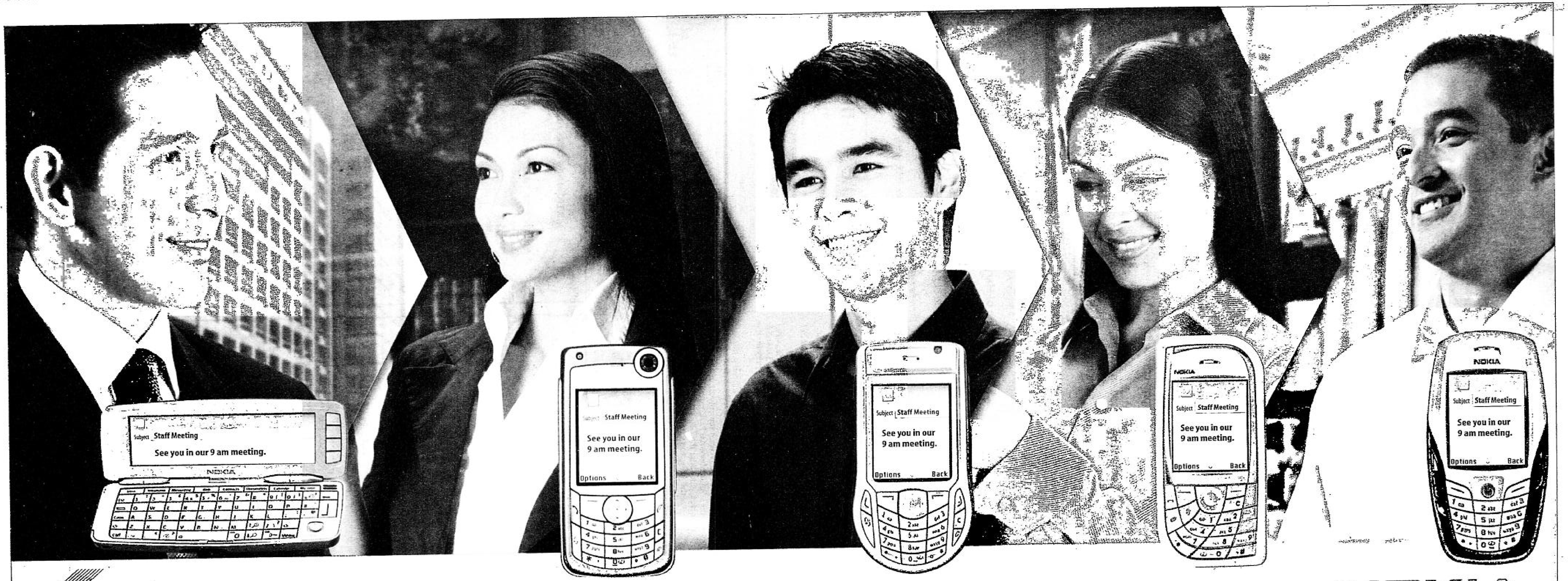

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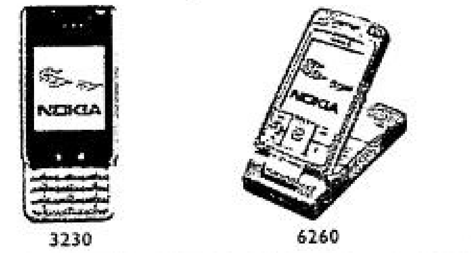

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To set MMS Settings on your phone, text SET MMS <phone model> to 211. Ex. SET MMS <N6600>. To activate MMS on your phone, text MMS ON to 333.

For questions, comments, or concerns, you may call the SMART Corporate Hotline at #888; the SMART Hotline at 888-1111; *888 using your SMART celfone; send a text message to 888 (Standard rate in excess of the FREE TEXT allocation applies), e-mail us at smartgold@smart.com.ph, visit our website at www.smart.com.ph, or visit the SMART Wireless Center nearest you.

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Waging war against book piracy

BESIDE any major campus or university in the country, there lies a stretch of photocopying kiosks that almost always do brisk business.

Of recent years, more and more students resort to photocopying portions of books they need for class, or worse, even the whole textbook.

It does not seem much when one student does it. But when whole classes of students across various schools resort to photocopying; or a wily opportunist produces bootleg copies to sell at a third of the original price, it poses a crisis for the book publishing industry.

RP: Pirates' prey?

Textbooks are prime commodities in a developing country that purportedly nurtures a healthy interest in education and uses English as a teaching medium. But the Philippines also has a weak tradition of respect for copyright laws, making it an easy prey to commercial pirates.

Losses are valued at about $48 million or P2 billion a year, making the country the No. 1 hotspot in 2003.

Today, book piracy has gotten worse in China and India, but it remains prevalent in the Philippines.

"Our country lacks the teeth, funds, and willpower to implement laws," asserts Rolando de Vera, chair of the Publishers' Representatives Organization of the Philippines (PROP). "We also lack an educational campaign on the Copyright Law. Some people do not know they are committing piracy, and those who are aware get away with it because they do not get convicted or jailed."

In the most basic terms, the unauthorized reproduction of a textbook qualifies as piracy, whether you're making multiple copies and selling them for profit, or merely photocopying a substantial part (more than five percent) of any book.

In the Philippines, the most pirated volumes are imported textbooks for highly specialized courses like medicine or engineering.

Pirates cater to a big market, as students pursuing higher education are heavily dependent on textbooks. It does not come as a surprise that inside university libraries are photocopying machines that make it easy for students to copy any book.

WEAK copyright laws make the Philippines easy prey to commercial pirates.

In far-flung provinces that lack in supply of textbooks, piracy has also become a way of life.

The modus operandi

De Vera says pirates station themselves in different schools offering their inventory to students. They participate in conventions, displaying original books up front, but concealing pirated copies under the tablecloth.

"A certain company called Multilinks Book Supply was raided a few years ago during a convention of the Philippine College of Physicians. Its owner was convicted for 11 counts of copyright violation. This could be the first successful case in the country, but no arrest or imprisonment has been made yet."

The most difficult to catch, De Vera stresses, are pirates mushrooming in and outside campuses.

"They only have one copying machine and are engaged only on an order basis. They do not stock pirated copies and cannot be subjected to raids," De Vera reports.

Combating piracy

While the government still has a long way to go in putting up an efficient stronghold against piracy, local and foreign publishers are consolidating efforts towards eliminating it.

"PROP is currently coordinating with the Association of American Publishers (AAP) and they have given us funds to conduct educational campaigns, raids and media promotions," De Vera states.

Last year, 12 copying centers in Sta. Cruz and Sampaloc were raided, and cases will soon be filed against them. This year, PROP is scheduling another round of raids.

De Vera also recommends ways for schools to help stop textbook piracy: "Schools must teach their students about the Copyright Law and must not allow students to bring pirated copies inside the campus. Teachers must not encourage their students to photocopy any book. Libraries must not allow photocopying of books and storing of pirated copies."

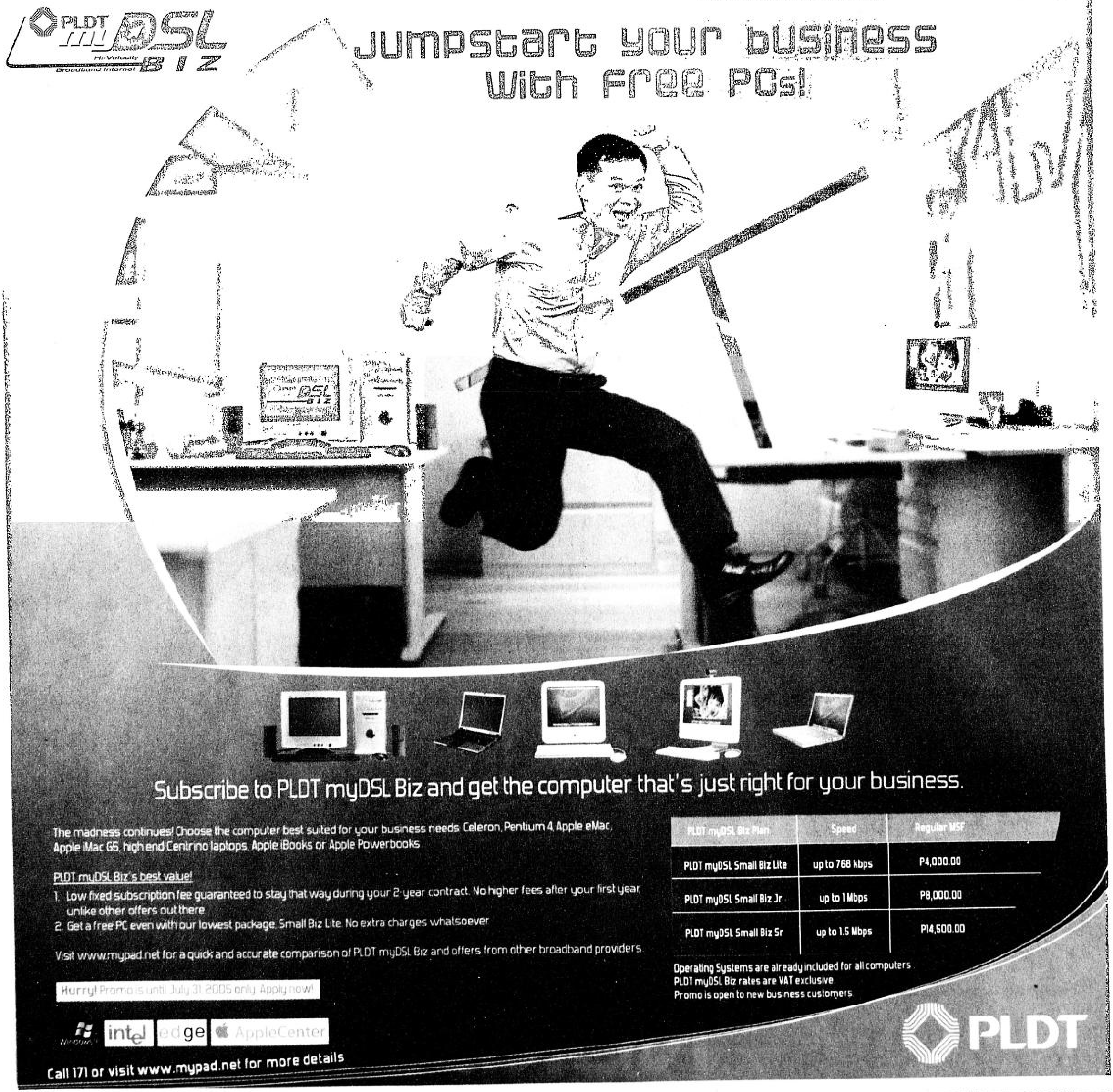
De Vera further recommends that CHED come up with regulations on photocopying on-campus, and include subjects on intellectual property in the school curriculum. He reveals that PROP placed some universities on surveillance, and found that many of them are violators of the Copyright Law.

To spread the word about their crusade, PROP joins the 26th Manila International Book Fair (MIBF) on Aug. 31 to Sept. 4 at the World Trade Center, Pasay City.

With the theme "It's Hip to Read!" the MIBF once again unites local and foreign publishers, wholesalers, retailers, book lovers and collectors, librarians, authors, publishers' representatives, and every major player in the publishing industry in its continuing efforts to promote books and reading.

For details, call 890-0661 or 896-0682, or e-mail bookfair@primetradeasia.com.

Blooey Singson, Contributor



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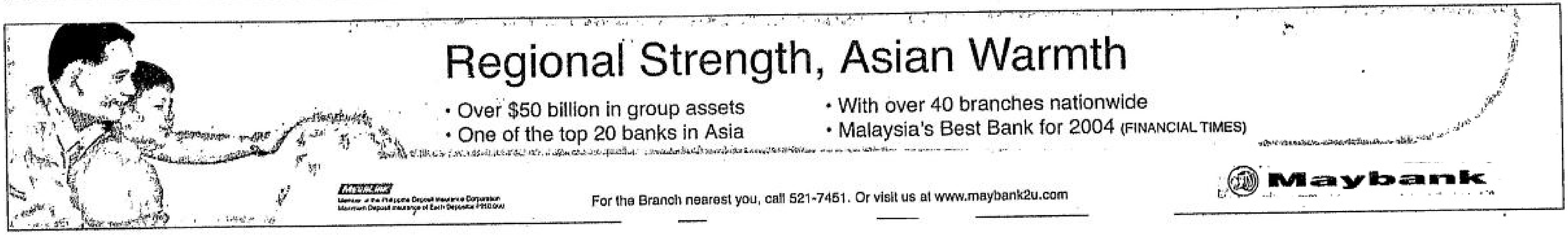

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Making Great Things Possible for SMEs

Agnes Celeste D. Fernando, Globe Telecom

Globe Telecom salutes the Outstanding Filipino SME's.

Growing the SME sector is critical to generating jobs and developing our economy. The big question however is: How can the Filipino Entrepreneur grow, expand his market reach, both local and international, and transition to become a world-class Filipino Entrepreneur? The collaboration of different sectors of society is important in providing a nurturing environment for the Filipino entrepreneur to succeed. This involves the collective support of the government, industry associations, financial institutions and technology providers.

Globe, as a technology partner, contributes to the enabling environment for SMEs by coming up with total telecommunication solutions for the Filipino entrepreneur. Leveraging on technology that allows entrepreneurs to reduce their cost of doing business, improve their service and better respond to the competitive environment is Globe's participation in developing the SME segment.

Mobile Communication

A range of flexible mobile plans (G-Plans, GFlex Plans) in Postpaid or Prepaid depending on the communication needs of the entrepreneur. Various services available such as Voice Calls (local, NDD, IDD, International Roaming), Text (local, international), and Value-Added Services (VAS).

Autoload Max for SMEs

Allows the entrepreneur to manage his communication expenses by reloading his employees' prepaid accounts individually or in bulk. Prepaid load sending can be scheduled, or transferred on-demand.

Text Collect & Call Collect

This service allows the employees on prepaid to text or call the Boss when there's an important message, or an office emergency, even if they are out of prepaid load credits.

Landline Telephones

Fixed Landline Phones available in Postpaid and Prepaid plans. Globelines Prepaid is a basic phone service with metered outgoing calls, no fixed Monthly Fee. Globelines Postpaid offers full incoming call capability, free local calls and extra features.

Centrex (Business Plus)

A virtual PABX service that links office phones together to provide communications management capabilities without the entrepreneur having to invest in a switching equipment.

Internet Access

Worldpass is a new Internet service that allows subscribers to access the Internet in three ways - via broadband from any Globelines-connected PC, dial-up from any computer using any landline within the country, or Wi-Fi from any GlobeQUEST Wiz hotspot using a Wi-Fi enabled laptop, PDA or mobile phone. Worldpass is the all-in-one mobile Internet account. It puts all types of Internet connectivity under one account so subscribers get instant Internet access anywhere and anytime. It even allows multiple users under one account.

High-Speed Internet Access

Broadband is high-speed Internet, which is at least seven times faster than dial-up. Broadband allows entrepreneurs to send and receive e-mails with larger attachments, to chat, to transfer files (video and audio), to access web sites faster, and to have multiple users in a single location.

Web Hosting

Allows the Filipino Entrepreneur to participate in the global market by having a corporate web site. Be online, go global with the Globe web hosting service.

GCASH for SMEs

Fast, secure, and reliable way to send and receive remittances and payments. It is the first and only integrated wireless and cardless mobile phone-based micro-payments system. Allows the Filipino entrepreneur to pay bills and suppliers electronically via SMS, send petty cash and payroll, as well as accept orders and payments from the huge base of overseas Filipino workers who might be interested to order remotely for their relatives and friends here and pay for it via electronic cash.

Mobile E-mail

BlackBerry

Allows the entrepreneur to be always reachable even when outside the office. Imagine the freedom of carrying your office with you wherever you are, and be able to respond to all your e-mails because it is conveniently delivered to your mobile phone. With mobile e-mail, the Filipino entrepreneur is no longer limited in the office location or by the 8 to 5 local office hours.

Tracker

See where your team and your vehicles are - on the web or on your Globe Handyphone.

Tracker allows the entrepreneur to locate their employees and deliveries anywhere in the supply chain through simple SMS. The system is flexible: you can pull location information when needed, on-demand, or schedule the location tracking at chosen intervals - every minute or every hour.

Text Broadcast through TxtConnect

The entrepreneur can send text broadcasts to customers, suppliers, employees or any pre-registered group, immediately or on schedule. TxtConnect allows the entrepreneur to save time and communication costs by eliminating the need to print and deliver messages.

Remote Store/Branch Management

Store Express, Web-based Security, and NetDrive are solutions that allows the entrepreneur the freedom to remotely manage his chain of stores/branches or warehouse. The entrepreneur can observe what's happening inside his store or warehouse without physically being there, and to transfer critical sales/inventory data to a central monitoring location.

Globe SME Hotline

In support of the SME sector, Globe is launching an SME/Business Hotline for Filipino entrepreneurs. Because entrepreneurs and business owners have unique requirements, the Globe Business Hotline will serve these needs differently from a typical individual. Call the Globe Business Hotline Number 730-1020 to know more about Globe's products and services.

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Filipino Entrepreneur

Globe Telecom is one with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), SMED Council, UPISSI, Small Enterprise Research & Development Foundation, Inc. and PCCI in helping the Filipino SME. Kung magtutulungan, tuloy-tuloy ang pagsulong ng SME.

On the occasion of the
Small and Medium Enterprise
(SME) Development Week
18-24 July 2005

We salute this year's
Outstanding SME Graduates
for contributing to the new vigor of the SME sector
through their remarkable growth
and improvement in business performance.

2005 OUTSTANDING SME GRADUATES

Micro Enterprise Category

1. Rejano's Bakery
arrowroot cookies, bread, tamarind, peanut butter, banana chips, polvoron
Ms. Carmelita R. Reyes
Brgy. Banahaw, Sta. Cruz, Marinduque

2. Uad Food Manufacturing
vinegar, wine and rice cakes
Mr. Utmiel A. Damaso
Pongpongan, Jones, Isabela

3. Rynel's Machine Shop
machine servicing and manufacturing
Mr. Noel Dalumpines
Quezon Avenue, Digos City, Davao del Sur

4. Paete Manufacturing Cooperative
paper mache, wood carvings, resin,
tins and metals
Mr. Venerando V. Baldemor
F. Sario Street, Bo. Maytoong, Paete, Laguna

5. Mallari's Nursery Furniture
nursery furniture
Mr. Ariel Mallari
Olongapo-Gapan Road, Concepcion, Lubao, Pampanga

6. Jehara Marketing
Dried Eucheuma Cottonii Seaweed
Ms. Aida Taug Mohamad
Dablo St., Santiago District, Pagadian City, Zamboanga del Sur

7. RJS Furniture Shop
sala sets, dining sets, cabinets, door panel/jambs, parquet
Ms. Lolita C. Ambre
Pongo, Nagtipunan, Quirino

8. La Mode Industries
bags, baskets, bread trays, hampers,
light furniture
Ms. Aurora Azañes-Rico
No. 28 Sta. Salud, Calabanga, Camarines Sur

Small Enterprise Category

1. Pagadut Antiques and Wood Art
garden swing, wheel benches, garden sets,
nativity sets,gift items out of hard woods
Mr. & Mrs. James Pagadut
National Highway, Tactac, Sta. Fe, Nueva Vizcaya

2. Lola Abon's Durian Candies, Inc.
durian fruit preserves, durian candies, tarts, yema and other durian processed fruits
Mr. Roberto R. Saniel
23 San Miguel Village, Matina, Davao City

3. King Real Laundry Soap Manufacturing
laundry and beauty soap
Mr. Rudy Ang
King-King, Pantukan, Compostela Valley

4. Alvin's Floral Designs and Blooms
fossilized dried flowers and
skeletonized leaves
Ms. Lucena U. Aguas
San Marcos, Cabarroguis, Quirino

Medium Enterprise Category

1. Rancho Sn. Roque Corporation
farm inputs, dairy products, cattle, palay, corn, Carageenan, mango, copra
Mr. Rosendo S. Labadlabad
Guisokan, Sindangan, Zamboanga del Norte

2. Philippine Pastries, Incorporated
pastries, bread products
Ms. Anabel Tangco
Pasong Tamo, Makati City

3. Anjo Farms, Inc.
bangus (plain, marinated and smoked, belly and fillet)
Mr. Jose Enrique Q. Tanjanco
Brgy. Sabangan, San Fabian, Pangasinan

4. Magpet Agro-Industrial Resources Cooperative
coconut cooking oil, copra, natural crumb rubber, construction materials
Mr. Jesus O. Kionisala
MAGIRCO Complex, Gubatan, Magpet, North Cotabato

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JOHNNY PARAS
Shamrock

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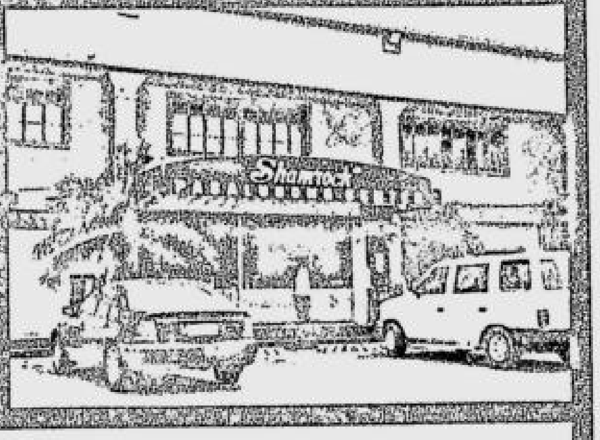

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Extreme 768	₱7,500	768 Kbps	5
Extreme 1mb	₱10,000	1 Mbps	5

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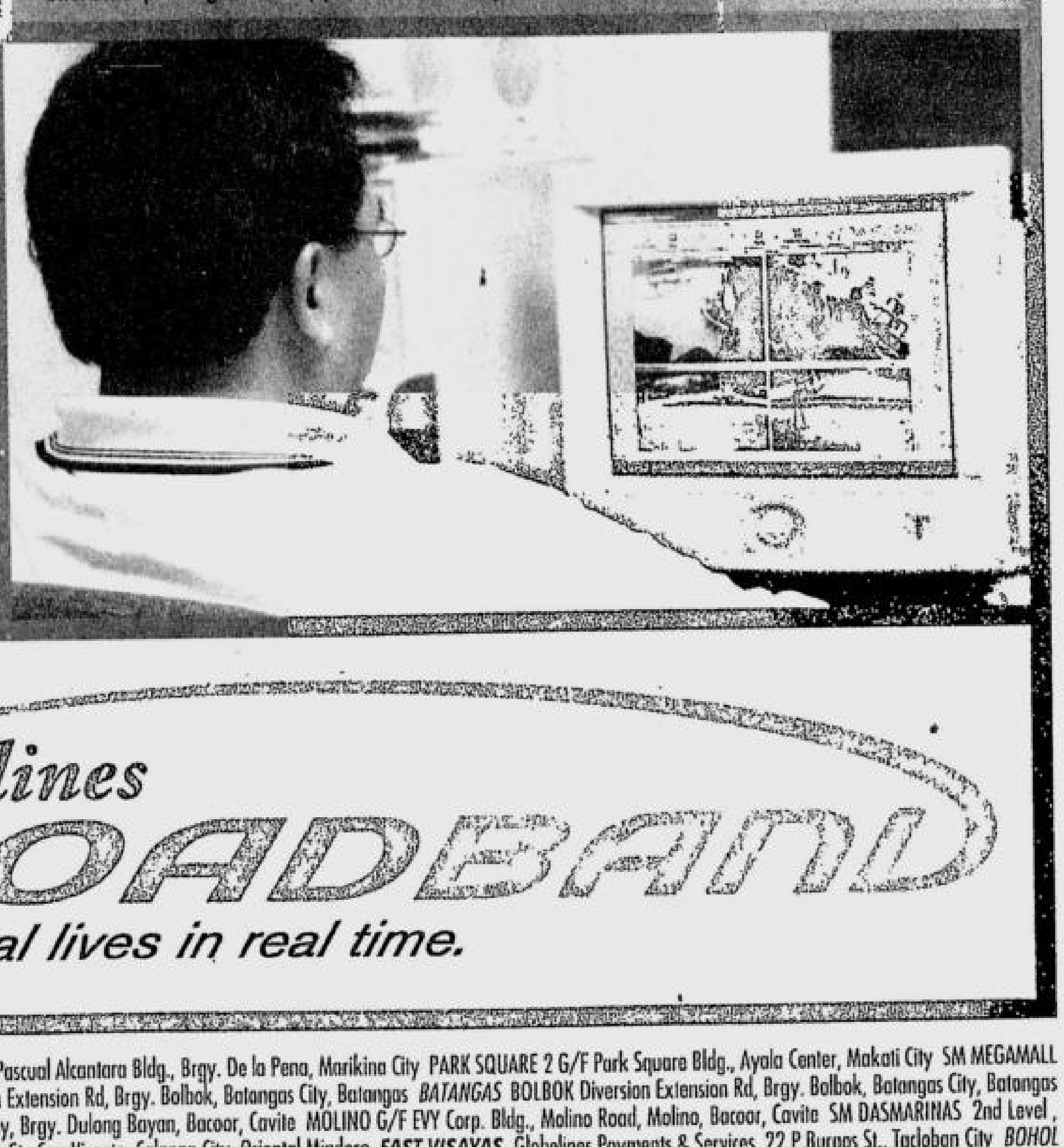

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More than just skin care

By Amy R. Remo

EVANGELISTA

"MANAGING one's company is like managing a married life."

Stiefel Philippines general manager Neogin Evangelista says this is how he keeps his staff strewn together and leads the company to growth since he joined the local subsidiary in 1997.

US-based Stiefel Laboratories is the world's largest private dermatology-focused pharmaceutical company.

MANAGEMENT STYLES

Its Philippine subsidiary, established in 1983, emerged as one of the three largest and strongest players in the dermatology industry.

Some 75 percent of its sales come from dermatology clinics and hospitals while the 25 percent come from over-the-counter sales. One of its more popular products is Panoxyl, an acne cream.

"Just like in a marriage, you have to have commitment to your people, company and products, respect for each others' differences, trust and communication or openness so that in turn, the employees will treat the company in the same manner—with commitment, trust, respect and openness," states Evangelista.

Without these, Evangelista says it would be difficult to lead and motivate people to do well in their jobs.

And this is crucial, he adds, because you need a good team who can run and promote Steifel's products to the doctors and drugstores.

Part of Stiefel's workforce, for instance, is the medical representatives who go around clinics and hospitals where they market Stiefel products.

"These frontliners must be able to cultivate a good relationship with the customers but they can only do so effectively if they are satisfied with their company and working environment," he adds.

One of the best ways to motivate employees is to express sincere care for their personal development.

Stiefel's 60 employees are given ample training, guidelines, chances and incentives.

Evangelista says that they have "above average" compensation packages compared with other firms in the industry.

"Also, local and foreign job opportunities for employees abound since Stiefel has grown into a global manufacturing and distribution organization servicing more than 100 countries," he adds.

"Another important way of motivating employees is by empowering them," says Evangelista.

This means giving employees enough freedom to accomplish their goals at their own styles. Incentives are given, usually in the form of cash and foreign travels.

"Of course, you have to define as well the responsibility and accountability that goes along with certain tasks," he adds.

"What is really more important is always recognizing a job well done. A simple pat in the back goes a long way," says Evangelista.

When he joined Stiefel, the country was feeling the crunch of the Asian economic crisis.

"But even so, the company experienced an average growth rate of 13 percent in my first five years," says Evangelista.

As of end-2004, Stiefel Philippines has grown by seven times since 1997. Among 50 Stiefel subsidiaries, it ranks 11th, while in the Philippines, it ranks third.

However Evangelista says the company is evaluated in terms of US dollars, so "we're losing on the exchange rate."

Evangelista says Stiefel's sustained growth can be attributed mainly to three things: its high-quality products, clinical efficacy and safety; good relationship with customers; and the right competent team to promote its products.

Today, Stiefel faces various challenges such as the possibility of price control being implemented and rumors of engaging in cartel with other pharmaceutical companies.

It also faces competition from the rising popularity of cosmetic skincare products.

Nevertheless, Evangelista says they are confident they will ride these waves of challenges.

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Planning Your Technology Systems

By Ricky Banaag, Intel Microelectronics Philippines, Country Manager

You own a Small and Medium Business (SMB) along with 27 million others in Asia. To stay ahead of the game, you have to know your market and competition. Careful selection and maintenance of technology that fits your company's needs is essential. No matter what level of technology you use, if you haven't updated it in the last 2 or 3 years your system is probably in need of an overhaul. Better IT planning will give you more time to do the job you are best at; running your business.

Recognizing the IT ROI – The Business Benefits of SMBs

The presence of a computer where there wasn't one before can have startling consequences. PCs can improve employee productivity by equipping your staff with enhanced responsiveness to take on the increasingly greater demands of today's multitasking small business environment.

Finding Your Way Through the Upgrade Maze

Whether you have only one PC or an advanced network, a computer influence's an employee's performance more than any other part of your technology system.

Upgrading a computer, like adding a video card, can be a valuable way to customize it to your employee needs. However, extending a computer's life purely by swapping components is a poor strategy in the long run.

Sorting Out the Resource Mismatch

In an effort to simplify and standardize technology systems, many companies give their employees computers that do not correspond to their tasks. Workers on the road may primarily use desktops, or office employees may rely on laptops. Having a technology system that is tailored to your employees needs is just as important as having up to date technology.

Who's Serving the Server, Then?

As your company's IT needs grow, you will need a way for multiple users to share computer applications and information. A server is a significant investment, but they come in different sizes and can be tailored to your company's needs. Reliable real servers, like those based on the Intel® Xeon processor, need significantly less maintenance time than a PC running server software. Intel® produces a processor specifically designed for running a server. It also uses Hyper-Threading technology and is significantly more reliable than non-server dedicated processors.

Maintaining a small technology system might seem like an easy job; and with the right technology, it is. It always helps to look for new ways to improve your technology system as it can increase your competitive edge in the long run.

APOSTLE of contemplative prayer in Manila /D1

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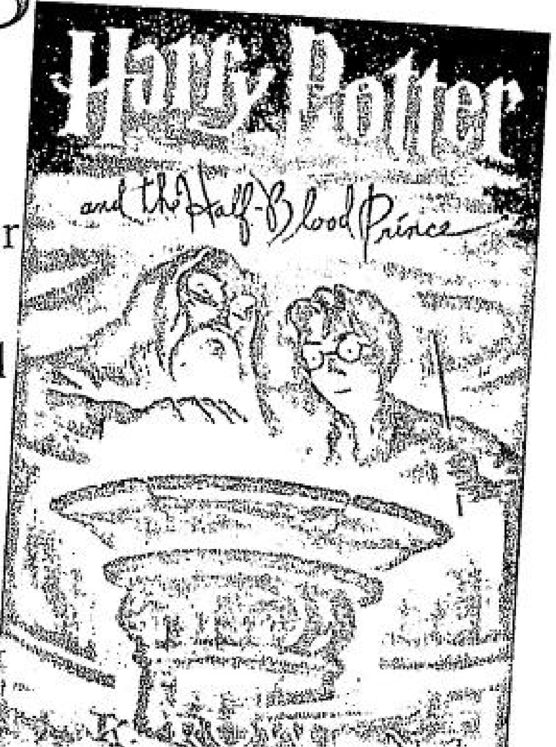
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso
Subsection Editor Lito B. Zulueta

MONDAY ARTS & BOOKS ● TUESDAY FITNESS ● WEDNESDAY 2BU ● THURSDAY FOOD ● FRIDAY FASHION & BEAUTY

New Harry Potter book is royal reading indeed

Humor, intrigue, death and terrific twists transfigure 'Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince' into a must-read



"Harry Potter and the Half-blood Prince"
By J.K. Rowling
Illustrations by Mary Grandpré
Arthur A. Levine Books, New York, 2005, 632 pages

By Ruel S. De Vera

"THE TROUBLE is, the other side can do magic, too," says the new Minister of Magic, the leonine Rufus Scrimgeour, at the beginning of J.K. Rowling's "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince," the much-awaited sixth installment in the magically best-selling Hogwarts series.

After years of waiting, faithful readers will find themselves flung, full-bodied, into the Second War hinted at in the final chapter in "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix," the fifth book. It is a war between the magical community against the Death Eaters, the dangerous followers of Lord Voldemort, aka Tom Marvolo Riddle, aka He-Who-Must-Not-Be-Named.

In this, supposedly the penultimate book in Rowling's Potter saga, Harry Potter and friends Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger arrive at the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry to begin their sixth year. But it is a

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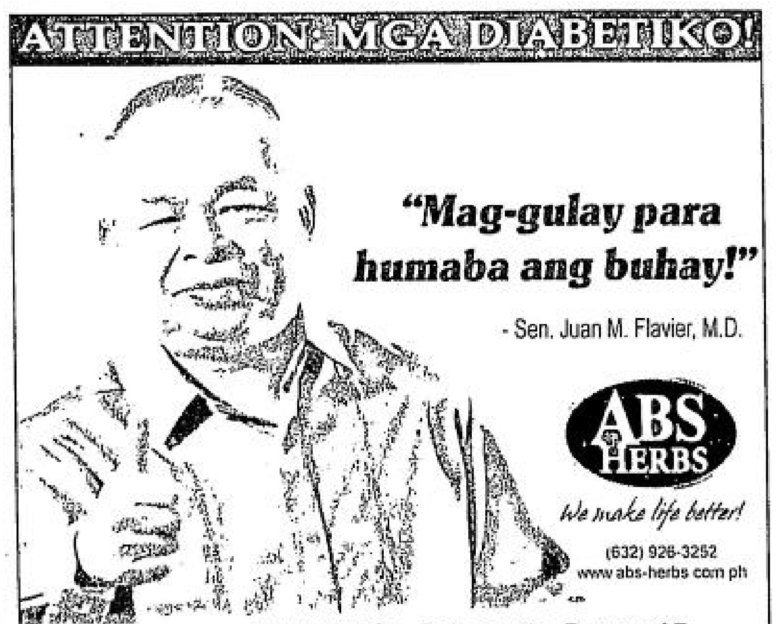

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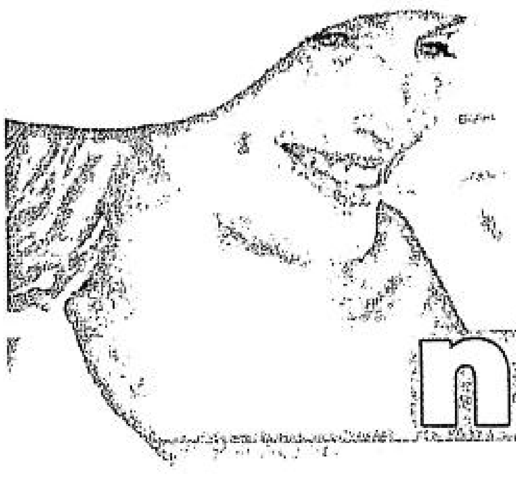

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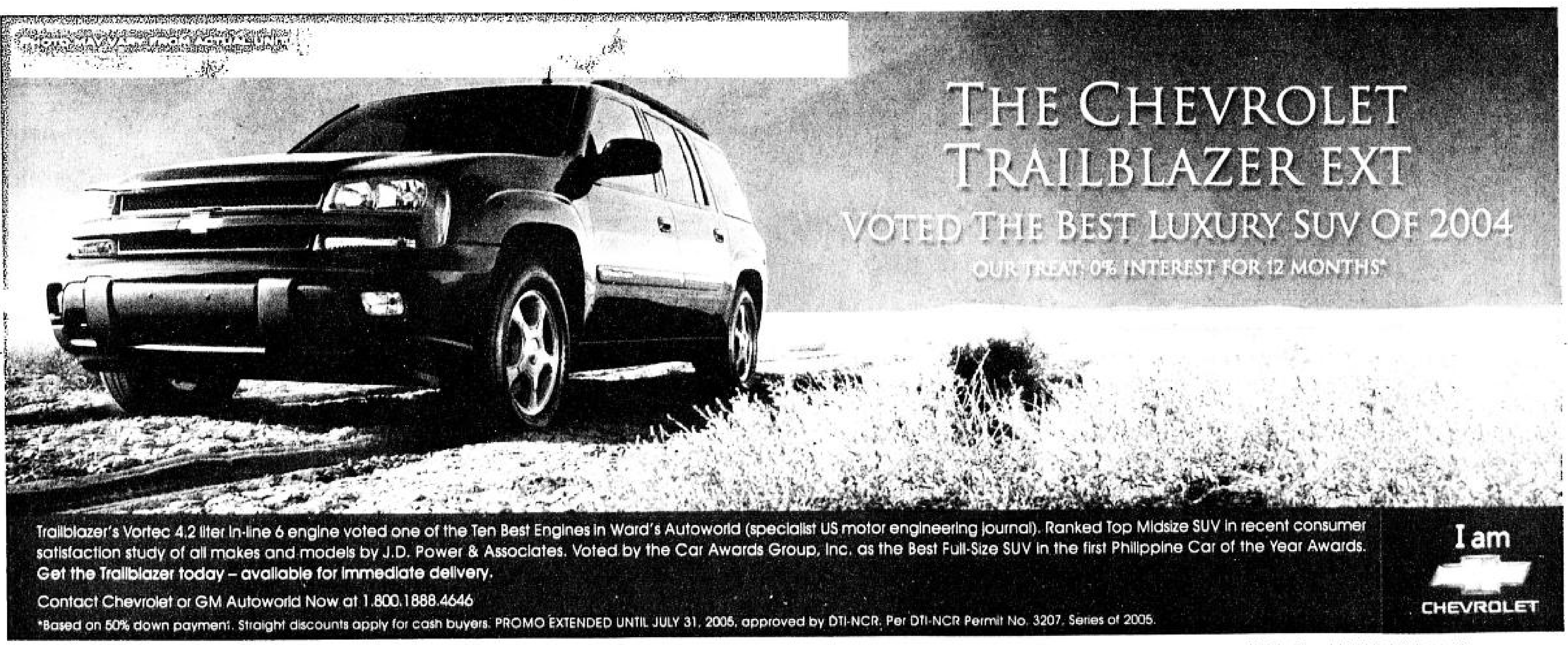

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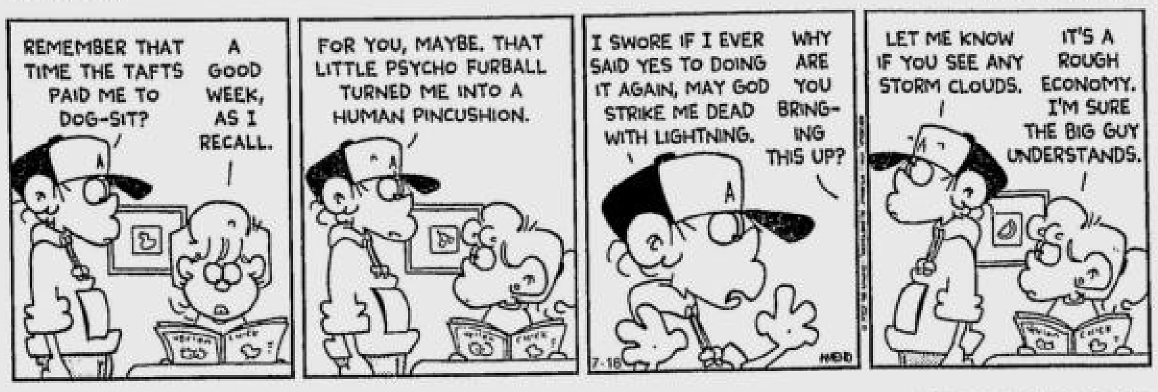
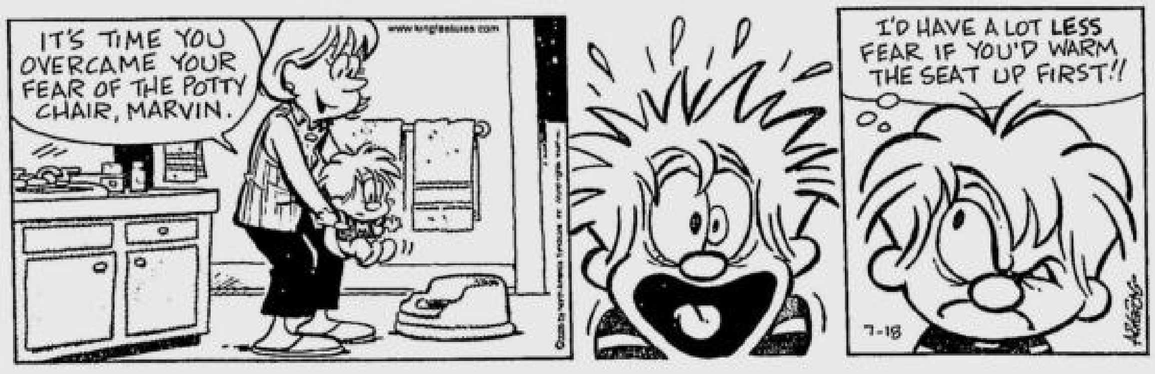
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


REMEMBER THAT TIME THE TAFTS PAID ME TO DOG-SIT?
A GOOD WEEK, AS I RECALL.
FOR YOU, MAYBE. THAT LITTLE PSYCHO FURBALL TURNED ME INTO A HUMAN PINCUSHION.
I SWORE IF I EVER SAID YES TO DOING IT AGAIN, MAY GOD STRIKE ME DEAD WITH LIGHTNING.
WHY ARE YOU BRINGING THIS UP?
LET ME KNOW IF YOU SEE ANY STORM CLOUDS.
IT'S A ROUGH ECONOMY. I'M SURE THE BIG GUY UNDERSTANDS.
7-18
AMEND

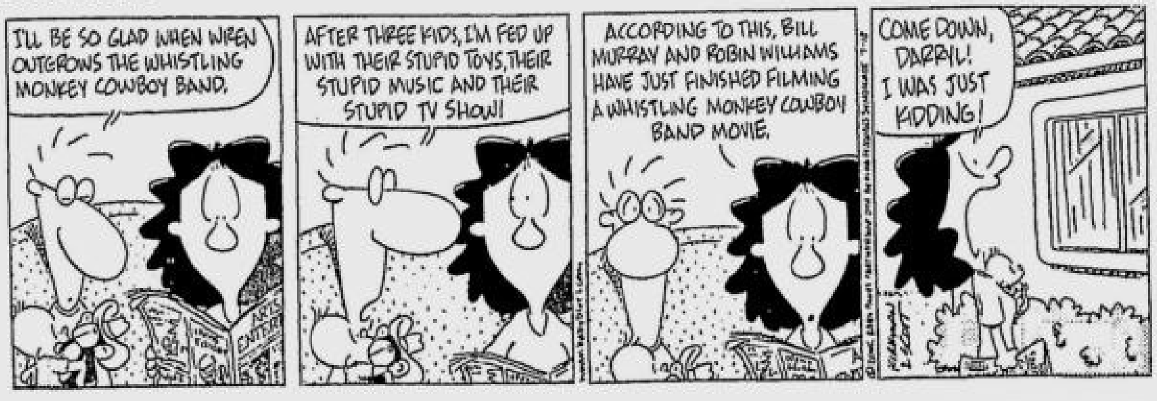
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


IT'S TIME YOU OVERCAME YOUR FEAR OF THE POTTY CHAIR, MARVIN.
www.kingfeatures.com
I'D HAVE A LOT LESS FEAR IF YOU'D WARM THE SEAT UP FIRST!!
7-18
ARMSTRONG

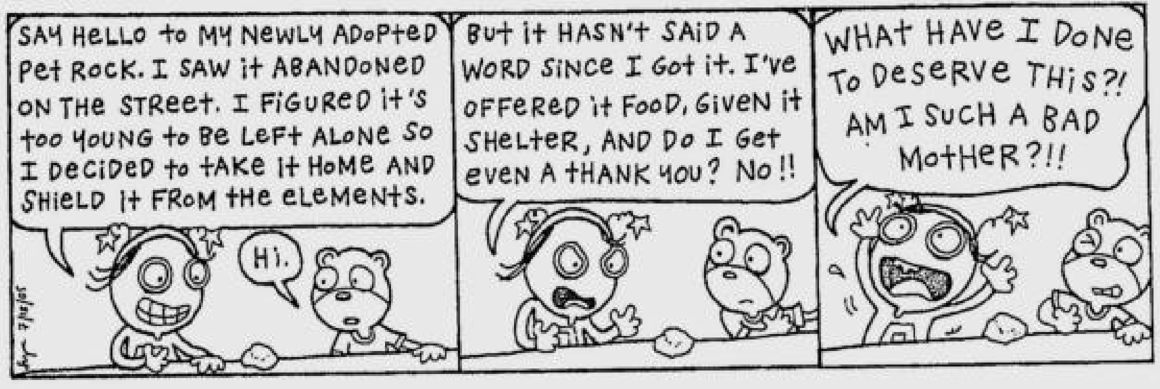
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


I'LL BE SO GLAD WHEN WREN OUTGROWS THE WHISTLING MONKEY COWBOY BAND.
AFTER THREE KIDS, I'M FED UP WITH THEIR STUPID TOYS, THEIR STUPID MUSIC AND THEIR STUPID TV SHOW!
ACCORDING TO THIS, BILL MURRAY AND ROBIN WILLIAMS HAVE JUST FINISHED FILMING A WHISTLING MONKEY COWBOY BAND MOVIE.
COME DOWN, DARRYL! I WAS JUST KIDDING!

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


SAY HELLO TO MY NEWLY ADOPTED PET ROCK. I SAW IT ABANDONED ON THE STREET. I FIGURED IT'S TOO YOUNG TO BE LEFT ALONE SO I DECIDED TO TAKE IT HOME AND SHIELD IT FROM THE ELEMENTS.
Hi.
BUT IT HASN'T SAID A WORD SINCE I GOT IT. I'VE OFFERED IT FOOD, GIVEN IT SHELTER, AND DO I GET EVEN A THANK YOU? NO!!
WHAT HAVE I DONE TO DESERVE THIS?! AM I SUCH A BAD MOTHER?!!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're basically levelheaded. You're also very kind and sensitive. You bring these qualities, along with a strong set of ethics, to whatever you do. The result for many of you is success, especially in financial terms. Family is always important. The year ahead is social, fun-loving and excellent for new love and romance. Enjoy! Birthdate of: Edgar Degas, artist; Anthony Edwards, actor; Atom Egoyan, director.

ARIES
(March 21 to April 19)
Something unexpected or surprising might suddenly and briefly thrust you into the limelight today. Therefore, be aware of what you are doing at all times.

TAURUS
(April 20 to May 20)
A quick, small opportunity to travel or expand your experience with publishing, educational matters, medicine and the law might take place today. You'll have a small window of time to make up your mind.

GEMINI
(May 21 to June 20)
You might be surprised to receive a little gift, an advantage or the use of something somebody else owns today. Just consider this a little gift from the universe. Smile and say "thank you."

CANCER
(June 21 to July 22)
Today's Moon opposes your sign, pulling your attention to others. Discussions with friends and partners are important. Something upbeat and novel will likely occur.

LEO
(July 23 to Aug. 22)
New technology might challenge you at work today. Surprises connected with technology, electricity and power are likely. Recharge whatever needs charging (cell phones, laptops, etc.).

VIRGO
(Aug. 23 to Sept. 22)
This is a playful day for you. You might develop a crush on someone older or more experienced. It's probably a two-way street. Be careful -- but enjoy yourself.

LIBRA
(Sept. 23 to Oct. 22)
Home, family and real estate are possible sources of surprise today. Someone unusual might visit where you live. Power outages and computer failures are also likely.

SCORPIO
(Oct. 23 to Nov. 21)
This is an interesting day. Unexpected events and people come at you from all directions. Keep an open mind. Be ready to learn something new.

SAGITTARIUS
(Nov. 22 to Dec. 21)
Impulse buying and spontaneous purchases are likely today. Similarly, new ideas about how to boost your earnings might also occur to you. Yay!

CAPRICORN
(Dec. 22 to Jan. 19)
The Moon is in your sign today. This makes you a bit more emotional than usual; it also brings you a bit of good luck. It's easy to be friendly with others today.

AQUARIUS
(Jan. 20 to Feb. 18)
You need time to be by yourself today. You might learn something unusual (possibly related to a modern, alternative wellness program). Either way, behind-the-scenes news catches you off-guard.

PISCES
(Feb. 19 to March 20)
Someone older, more experienced and a bit eccentric will cross your path today. Quite likely, you can learn something new from this person -- perhaps something technological, scientific or modern.

DAILY CROSSWORD

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5 Axton or Wilhelm
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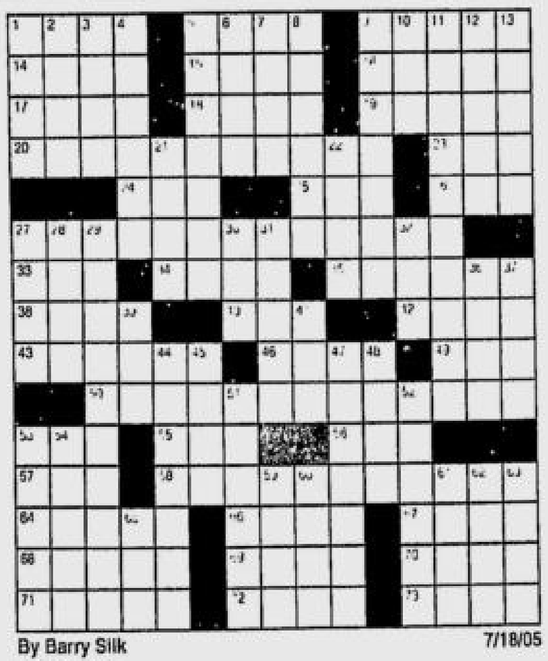
17 Wheel shaft
18 Basketball's Thurmond
19 Etching fluids
20 1963 hit by Shirley Ellis
23 Doggie doc
24 Like stolen goods
25 Have a late meal
26 Unspecified number
27 Smoker's remnant
33 Dockers' org.
34 Had the facts
35 Thoroughfare
38 Small stream
40 Golfer's peg
42 Not quite shut
43 Two-wheeled carriage
46 Holy Toledo!
49 Compass dir.
50 In favorable circumstances
53 Sopping
55 Charged particle
56 Little legume
57 "Xanadu" grp.
58 Cat box contents
64 Maui neighbor
66 Extra-wide shoe size
67 Slick
68 Brew holder
69 Product package info.
70 Celestial bear
71 "Demian" author
72 Polanski film
73 Adolescent



By Barry Silk
McLean, VA

7/18/05

DOWN
1 Verve
2 Full-length skirt
3 Fertilize, as roe
4 Franklin with soul
5 Do a surfing trick
6 Sharif of films
7 Hairy Himalayan
8 African fly
9 Keep still!
10 Gumshoe
11 Flying limo?
12 "As You Like It" forest
13 Appetizing
21 Wars of the Roses winner
22 Bathing places
27 Rnd. line
28 Pelvic pieces
29 Bile duct obstructions
30 Hanoi holiday
31 Twixt's partner
32 __-la-la
36 Bridge seat
37 Deuce topper
39 Hilo garland
41 Easter treat
44 B.C./Alaska river
45 To you, in Toulouse
47 Small pieces of computer code
48 Eins, zwei, __
51 Purpose
52 Dine al fresco?
53 Cardiff populace
54 Make joyful
59 Beret filler
60 Poisonous evergreens
61 Michelin product
62 If all __ fails..
63 Actress Meg
65 Greenish sloths

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

E	L	E	V	A	T	E	D	■	A	B	U	S	E	S
D	E	R	I	S	I	V	E	■	D	E	N	I	A	L
S	E	A	S	I	D	E	S	■	O	R	E	L	S	E
■	■	S	T	A	Y	■	■	C	R	E	A	T	E	D
C	L	E	A	N	■	P	A	L	E	S	T	■	■	■
O	A	R	S	■	D	A	N	A	■	F	E	A	S	T
U	G	H	■	R	U	M	O	R	M	O	N	G	E	R
P	O	E	■	E	M	P	T	I	E	R	■	G	N	U
L	O	A	N	D	B	E	H	O	L	D	■	R	I	M
E	N	D	E	D	■	R	E	N	O	■	B	E	L	A
■	■	■	S	E	D	E	R	S	■	R	I	S	E	N
S	H	A	T	N	E	R	■	■	L	O	S	S	■	■
L	U	B	L	I	N	■	E	M	U	L	S	I	F	Y
A	L	L	E	N	S	■	B	E	L	L	E	V	U	E
P	L	E	D	G	E	■	B	L	U	S	T	E	R	S

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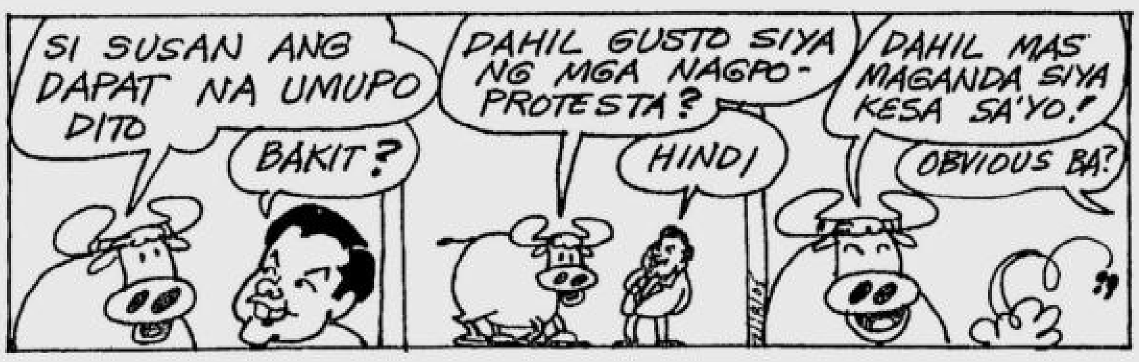
7/18/05

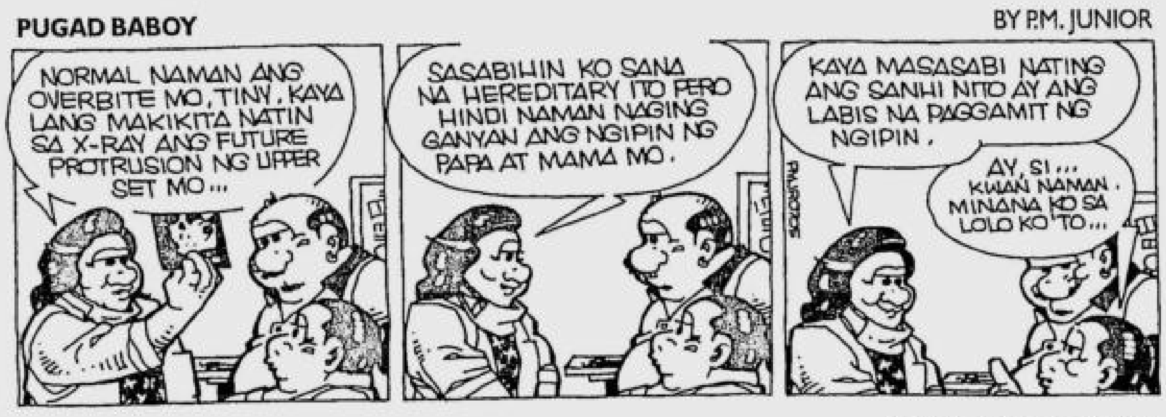
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


SI SUSAN ANG DAPAT NA UMUPO DITO
BAKIT?
DAHIL GUSTO SIYA NG MGA NAGPO-PROTESTA?
HINDI
DAHIL MAS MAGANDA SIYA KESA SA'YO!
OBVIOUS BA?

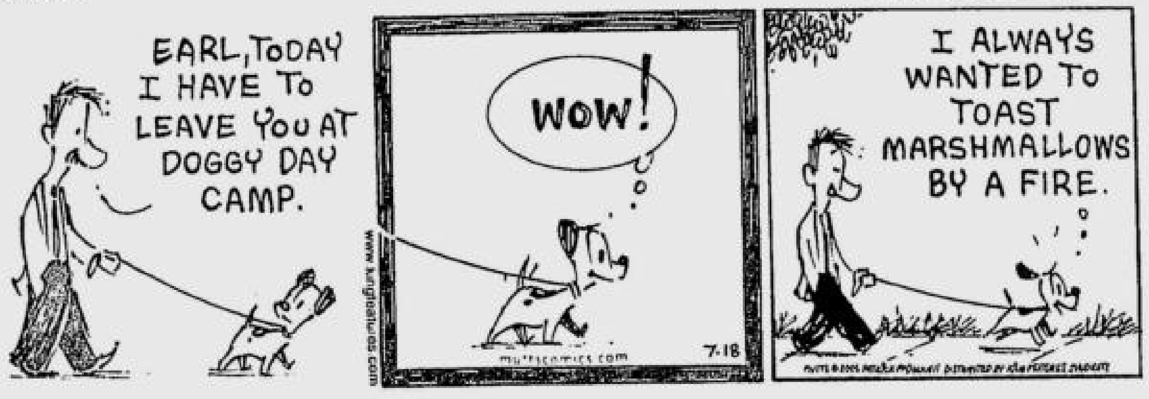
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NORMAL NAMAN ANG OVERBITE MO, TINY. KAYA LANG MAKIKITA NATIN SA X-RAY ANG FUTURE PROTRUSION NG UPPER SET MO...
SASABIHIN KO SANA NA HEREDITARY ITO PERO HINDI NAMAN NAGING GANYAN ANG NGIPIN NG PAPA AT MAMA MO.
KAYA MASASABI NATING ANG SANHI NITO AY ANG LABIS NA PAGGAMIT NG NGIPIN.
AY, SI... KWAN NAMAN. MINANA KO SA LOLO KO 'TO...

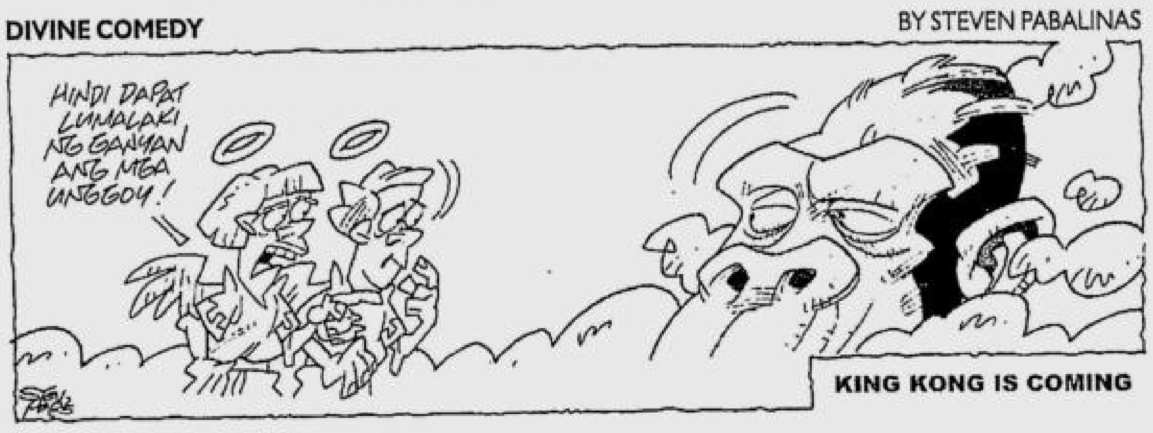
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


EARL, TODAY I HAVE TO LEAVE YOU AT DOGGY DAY CAMP.
WOW!
muttscomics.com
7-18
I ALWAYS WANTED TO TOAST MARSHMALLOWS BY A FIRE.

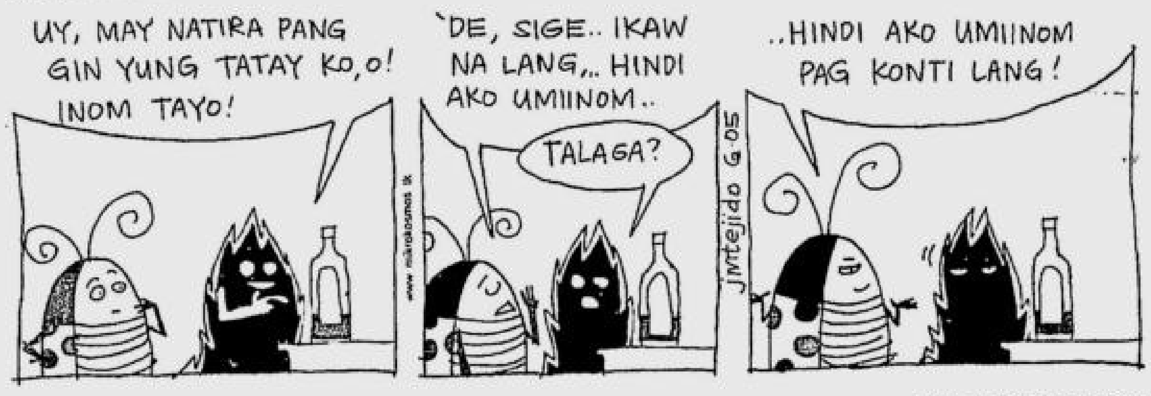
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


HINDI DAPAT LUMALAKI NG GANYAN ANG MGA UNGGOY!
KING KONG IS COMING

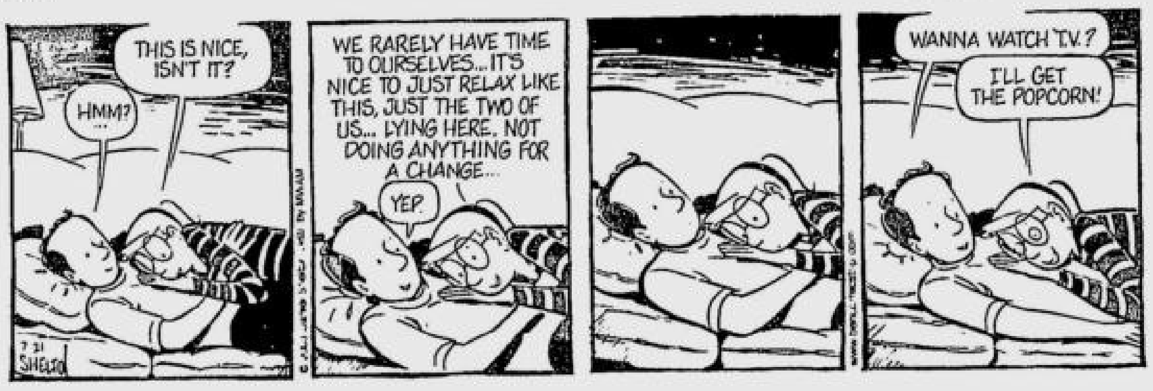
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


UY, MAY NATIRA PANG GIN YUNG TATAY KO, O! INOM TAYO!
'DE, SIGE.. IKAW NA LANG,.. HINDI AKO UMIINOM..
TALAGA?
..HINDI AKO UMIINOM PAG KONTI LANG!
jmtejido 6.05

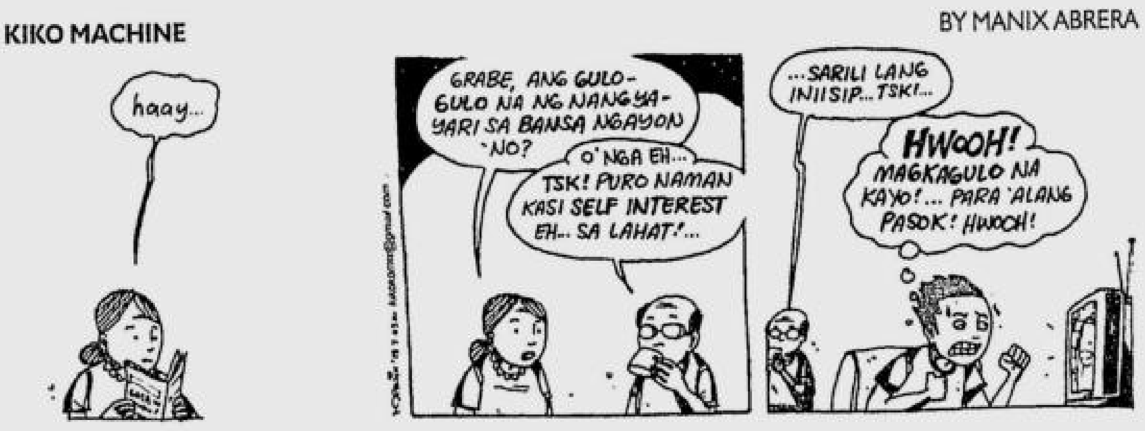
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


THIS IS NICE, ISN'T IT?
HMM?
WE RARELY HAVE TIME TO OURSELVES... IT'S NICE TO JUST RELAX LIKE THIS, JUST THE TWO OF US... LYING HERE. NOT DOING ANYTHING FOR A CHANGE...
YEP.
WANNA WATCH T.V.?
I'LL GET THE POPCORN!

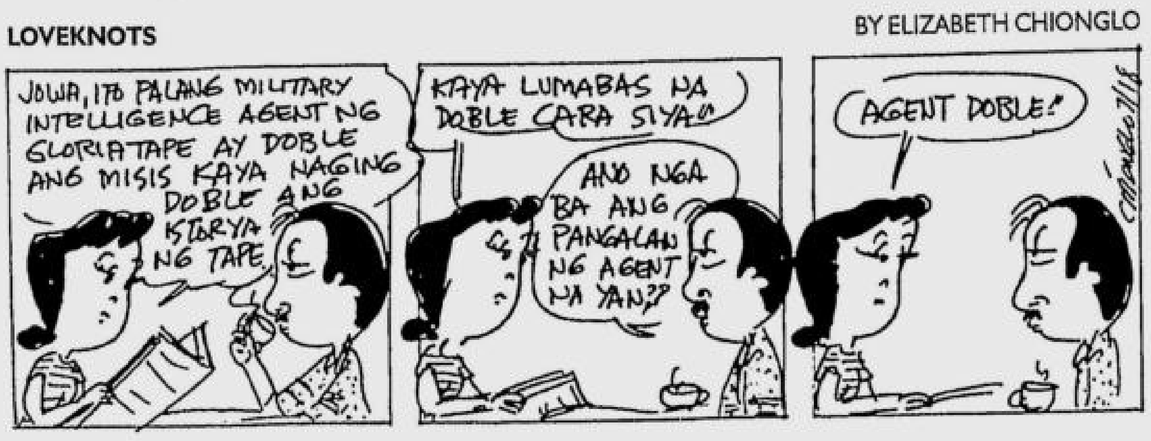
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


haay...
GRABE, ANG GULO-GULO NA NG NANGYAYARI SA BANSA NGAYON 'NO?
O' NGA EH... TSK! PURO NAMAN KASI SELF INTEREST EH.. SA LAHAT!...
...SARILI LANG INIISIP... TSK!...
HWOOH! MAGKAGULO NA KAYO!... PARA 'ALANG PASOK! HWOOH!

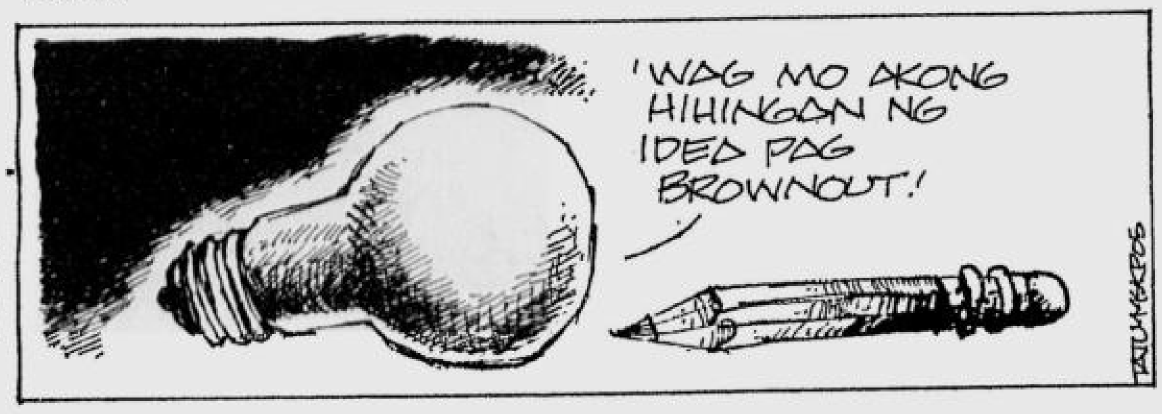
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JOWA, ITO PALANG MILITARY INTELLIGENCE AGENT NG GLORIATAPE AY DOBLE ANG MISIS KAYA NAGING DOBLE ANG ISTORYA NG TAPE
KAYA LUMABAS NA DOBLE CARA SIYA!
ANO NGA BA ANG PANGALAN NG AGENT NA YAN??
AGENT DOBLE!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


'WAG MO AKONG HIHINGAN NG IDEA PAG BROWNOUT!
TATUM MACROS

Feast of children's books

By Neni Sta. Romana-Cruz
Contributor

TOMORROW is National Children's Book Day. Initially celebrated by virtue of a presidential order, it is now a 22-year-old tradition. This year's theme is "Kay Sarap Magbasa sa Kandungan ni Mama."

The many delights that reading brings, the role of parents, teachers and all adults in nurturing young readers, the very basic need of putting books in children's hands—this is what the moveable feast is all about.

STEPH BRAVO

The choice of feast did not just happen by chance. For 116 years ago, the July 1889 issue of Trubner's Record, A Journal Devoted to the Literature of the East, a London monthly released on a Tuesday at mid-month, carried an article, "Two Eastern Fables," with the byline, "Dr. J. Rizal."

In the piece, Rizal compared two fables, "Tale of the Tortoise and the Monkey" from the Philippine Islands and "Battle of the Monkey and the Crab" from Japan. He believed the tales had the same origin. One interesting point he made was that the crab with its pincers and feet could easily climb a tree, something that would be impossible for a tortoise. Thus, Rizal said, the Philippine tale would be the older and the more accurate one.

The article showed Rizal devoted his scholarship to children's literature. We all know that while in Europe, he retold and illustrated that tale along with Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tales and sent them to his nephews and nieces in the Philippines.

The collected copies of Trubner's Record, named after the German-born publisher, Nicholas Trubner, who had a special interest in Oriental literature, are found in the Reading Room of the British Library's Oriental Office Collections. NCCA chair Ambeth Ocampo said the July 1889 issue is also available at the Lopez Museum in Pasig.

Book lover

A special feature of the annual Book Day at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) is the speech of a well-known book lover. This year, Ocampo will deliver that speech.

Another highlight is the awarding of the 2005 Salanga and Alcala Prize to Nikki Dy-Liacco, author of "The Yellow Paperclip with Bright Purple Spots," illustrated by May Ann Licudine.

Publishers will also launch their new releases: Adarna Books, Anvil Publishing, Canvas Inc., OMF Literature, Tahanan Books, and Vibal Books.

Despite problems in widening the audience for children's books, there are many things to celebrate.

Our children's books have gained international exposure in the 2004 International Board of Books for Young People Honour List: for writing, "Sandosenang Kuya" by Russell Molina; for translation, "Ruming's Night Secrets" by Rhandee Garlitos; for illustration, "Ang Unang Unggoy" by Jose Miguel Tejido; and for Outstanding Book for Young People with Disabilities, "Sandosenang Sapatos" by Luis Gatmaitan.

With help from the CCP and the Alitaptap Storytellers Philippines, "Wen Day Isang Araw" is heard every Saturday morning on DZAS. The program consists of storytelling and a conversation with a children's author. Incoming PBBY chair Manolo Silayan and Gatmaitan are involved in the program.

For the first time this year, "Read a Book" messages are flashed on LED monitors by SM Megamall, La Salle-Greenhills and Ayala Alabang, thanks to Emily Abrera.

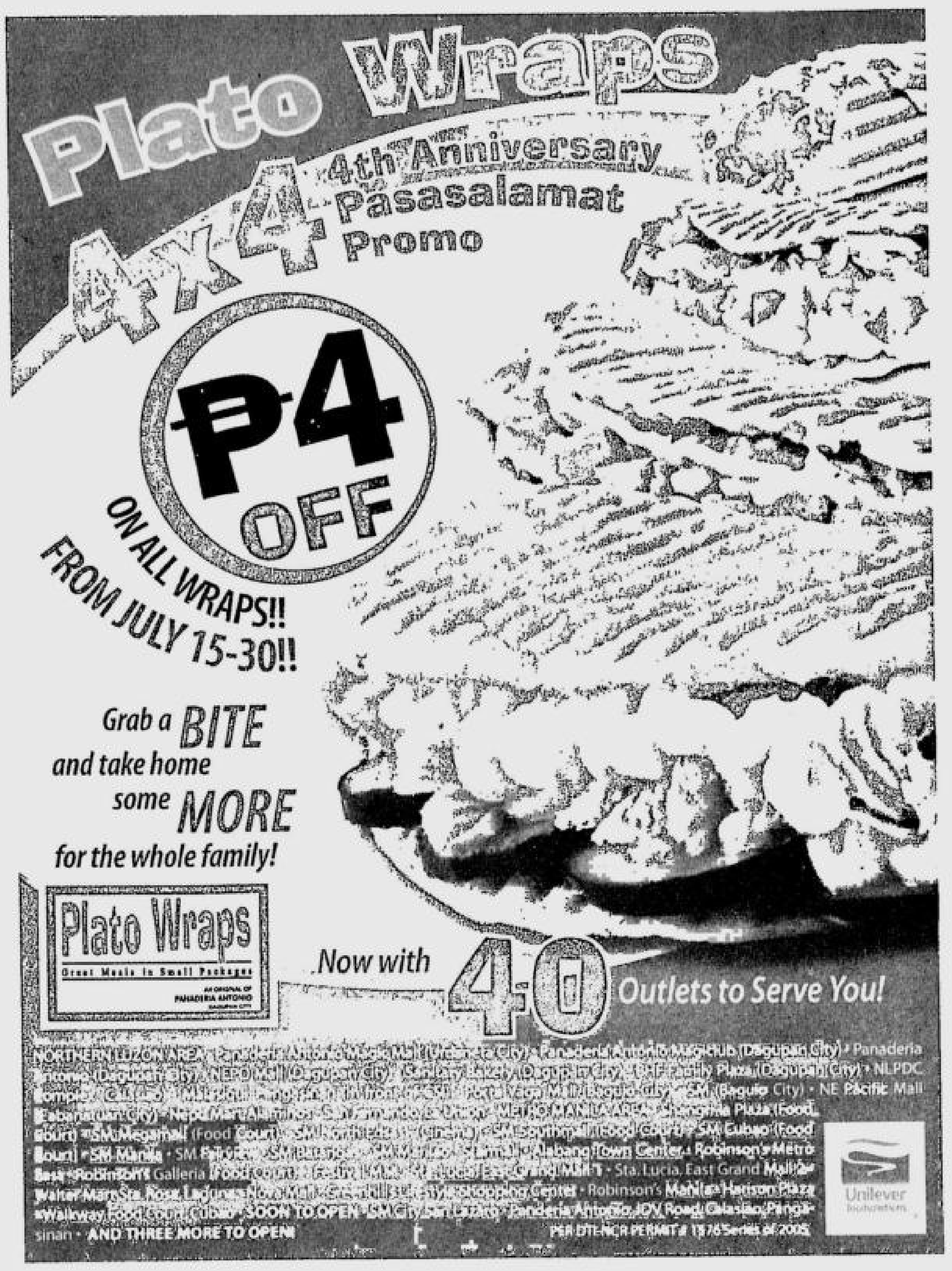
RCBC remains a corporate ally. It produces the yearly reading poster designed by Serj Bumatay. The Philippine Board of Books for Young People (PBBY) in turn supports RCBC on its yearly writing contest for children, the Kwentong Kalikasan Katha ng Kabataan, now on its 11th year.

The PBBY Storytelling Hour is a regular feature at the Museo Pambata.

Aside from Silayan and Abrera, PBBY board members are Mercy Abad, Emily Abrera, Ani Almario, Hermie Beltran, Karina Bolasco, Prudenciana Cruz, Zarah Gagatiga, Luis Gatmaitan, Ruben de Jesus, Sally Labanda, RayVi Sunico, Nina Lim Yuson, and this writer.

Call 3723548 or e-mail adarnahouse@adarna.com.ph.

E-mail feedback to nenisrc@gmail.com.



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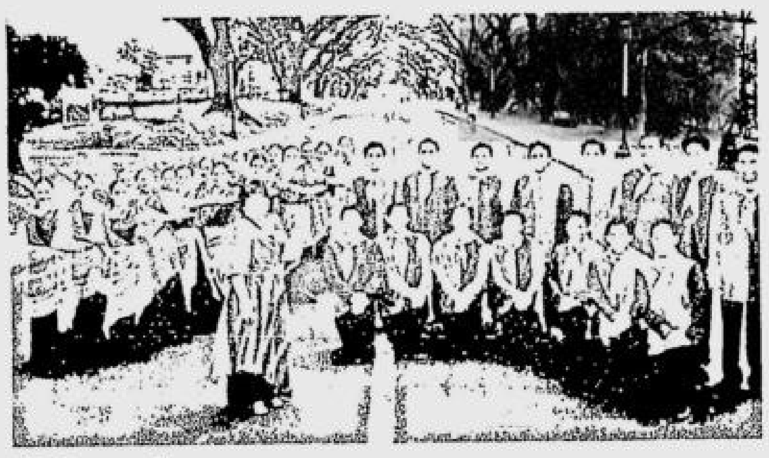

UP Concert Chorus

Musical concert kicks off investiture of UP president

THE BEST musical and artistic talents of the University of the Philippines will hold a tribute to UP president Emerlinda Roman through a special Pre-Investiture concert tonight at 6, at the Abelardo Auditorium, UP Diliman.

Titled "Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao: UP Naming Mahal," the concert will feature renditions of original Filipino music and dances from some of the University's multi-awarded performing groups such as the UP Madrigal Singers, the UP Concert Chorus, the UP Filipiniana Dance Group, the UP Dance Company, the Dulaang UP and the UP Jazz Ensemble. Solo performers include tenor Dean Ramon Acoymo of the UP College of Music and Dr. Roman's granddaughter, soprano Julia Roman Abueva. Miss Abueva, accompanied by pianist Dean Rowena C.L. Guevara of the College of Engineering, will interpret songs by Levi Celerio and George Canseco.

The concert paves the way for the celebration of Dr. Roman's formal investiture as 19th president of the University of the Philippines on July 21, 2 p.m., at the University Theater, UP Diliman. The investiture will also mark the launching of the UP Plan (2005-2011): "The UP: A National University in the 21st Century."

Dr. Roman's election by the UP Board of Regents was widely hailed in the UP System's seven constituent universities. She will preside over the UP's centennial celebrations in 2008. One of the priorities of her administration will be a Centennial Fund Drive aimed at augmenting the University's budget.

UST holds media lunch

UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas Rector Fr. Tamerlane Lana, O.P. will host a luncheon for the Thomasian Media Circle, the informal group of alumni in the media arts and industry, on July 20 at the Thomas Aquinas Research Complex.

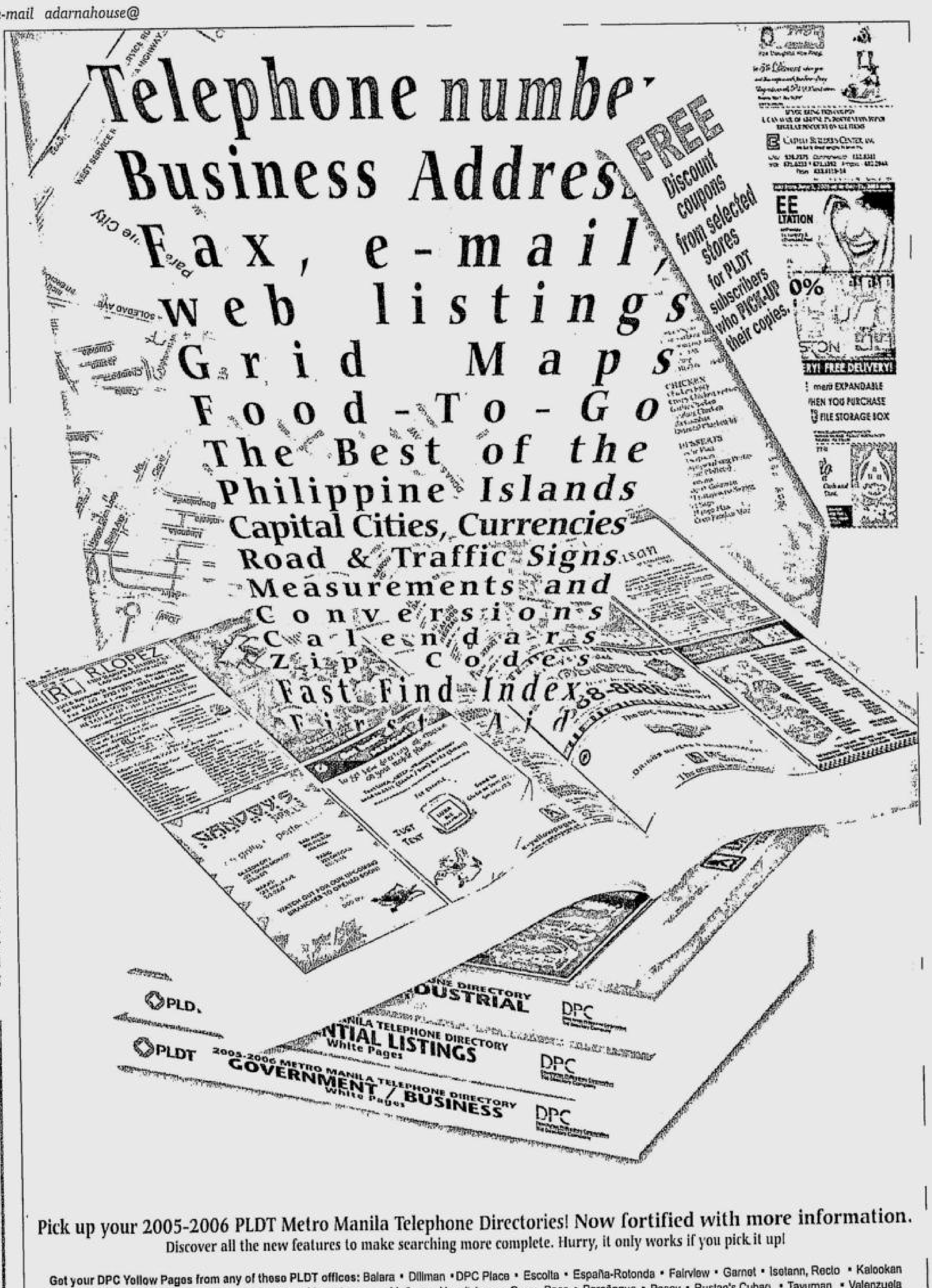
The luncheon is expected to gather hundreds of Thomasian practitioners in journalism, literature, broadcasting, advertising, public relations and even government, according to Secretary-General Fr. Isidro Abaño, O.P.

Those who have confirmed their attendance include INQUIRER founder Eugenia Apostol, National Artist F. Sionil Jose, and former New York Times correspondent and press undersecretary Alice Colet-Villadolid, officials said.

The luncheon will afford the Rector the chance to update media alumni on the preparations for UST's quadricentennial anniversary in 2011, Abano said.

The event will also give UST a chance to thank its alumni for reporting on UST activities in the media and providing a good "public image" for UST, officials said.

Call 7313119 or 4061611 loc. 8219.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New Harry Potter book is royal reading indeed

From page C1

different Hogwarts they return to, as the community seems to have become fearful of something that surrounds them but that cannot be divined.

Nevertheless, Harry must face all these with the additional challenges of growing up: He is now Quidditch Captain and the subject of much interest, especially from the girls. Yes, the idea of romance at Hogwarts, only glimpsed fitfully in "Order," is fleshed out fully in "Prince," as the 16-year-old friends find themselves in quite a few romantic predicaments. It also pays to be wary of love potions. As Harry thought: "He had an inkling that this might happen sooner or later. But he was not sure how he felt about it."

Yet that is only one of many elements surrounding Hogwarts life that "Prince" goes into, and Rowling's time writing the book has been well-spent. There is a palpable excitement here in naming things, adding new characters and bringing back old ones to the fold.

A bottled elixir of luck and a semi-transparent wizard are only some of the funny ideas bounding within "Prince's" pages. But Rowling has also brought the dangers and horrors much closer to Hogwarts. The magic war has spilled over to the Muggle world, and some characters are already dead at the book's beginning—with more blood to be shed.

Amazingly useful

Powerful Hogwarts headmaster Albus Dumbledore and Harry begin searching the past in hopes of understanding Voldemort's plans—and how to stop them. In the meantime, a battered old potions textbook proves amazingly useful for Harry in his potions class, a book with notes and scribbles by "the Half-Blood Prince."

Harry puzzles at this Prince's identity even as he obsesses over what he believes is rival Draco Malfoy's evil designs. Oh, and Harry fancies a girl for real.

This is pretty much what the readers want, a well-written, compact (it's actually shorter than the two books that preceded it), gripping tale with twists thrown in.

"Now she seemed older and much more serious and purposeful," says Harry of a witch he knows, and this is an accurate description for both Rowling and this book.

"Prince" is much darker than the earlier books, as Rowling is determined that her narrative grows up and grows more sophisticated as the protagonists increase in years. There is still the expected dense exposition in parts (particularly when Dumbledore and Harry get to talking) but this time, Rowling keeps the book rolling to a shocking finale that clearly lays the groundwork for the final Harry Potter book.

Rowling just keeps the scenes going, one development piling on top of the other, giving "Prince" a very busy yet controlled feel. The confidence in the lines is reminiscent of the third book, "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban," the best of the series thus far.

Hardheaded hero

Harry himself matures very nicely in "Prince," the edginess of a young adult starting to kick in, a hardheaded hero and a much more sympathetic young man of destiny. Ron is still funny (wait for the wisecracks, they're brilliant) and Hermione remains as obsessive-compulsive as ever. But the expanded cast, now including virtually everyone who appeared in the earlier books, also gives "Prince" its packed feel, despite being several hundred pages shorter than "Order." We reacquaint ourselves with Ginny, Luna, Neville, Lavender, Parvati and Seamus, among others.

Much of that also has to do with the unexpected twist, which will leave some readers open-mouthed. It is both a smart and surprising decision, one that clearly injects many new emotions and possibilities to the Harry Potter mythos.

The identity of this Prince is also quite clever, leading characters and readers feeling the pain of betrayal as well. It also makes the wait for the next book so much more meaningful—and impossibly long.

War has come to Hogwarts and while open combat has yet to erupt, it crawls and slithers through the corridors. There will be casualties. There will be sacrifices, old heroes and revealed villains. It is a time for great stories and an occasion when one remembers the new scars on Harry's hand: "I must not tell lies."

"Azkaban" remains the best Harry Potter book ever, but J.K. Rowling's newest creation, "Harry Potter and the Half-blood Prince" transfigures itself into clear close second, and well worth the wait. In wizardly words, fifty points to the House of Rowling!

Available in hardcover at National Bookstore and PowerBooks.

J.K. Rowling is PowerBooks' Author of the Month

WITH the much anticipated release of Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince this July, PowerBooks Specialty Store has chosen J.K. Rowling, author of the phenomenally successful Harry Potter series, to be its Author of the Month.

It is hard to believe that, Joanne Kathleen Rowling, currently the wealthiest woman in the United Kingdom and the first person to become a billionaire by writing books, once lived on welfare.

Rowling's big break came during a 4-hour train trip from Manchester to London. This was where, according to her, "Harry just strolled into my head fully formed." By the time she reached her destination she had the characters and a good part of the plot for "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" in her head.

She worked on the book for several years, at the same time struggling with major life changes—the death of her mother, moving to Portugal, getting married and divorced, and giving birth to her daughter.

J.K. ROWLING

In 1998, "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" was published and became a huge success. Potter-mania was born. J. K. Rowling's first book captivated readers around the world, and not only 9 to 11-year-old readers, but their siblings, parents, uncles, aunts, and pretty much anyone else who could hold a book and turn pages.

Rowling has thus far written and published four phenomenally successful sequels: "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets," "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban," "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" and "Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix." The sixth installment, "Harry Potter and the Half-blood Prince," with millions of copies already pre-ordered, is being launched worldwide this month.

J. K. Rowling has won the Hugo Award, the Bram Stoker Award, the Whitbread Award for Best Children's Book, a special commendation for the Anne Spencer Lindbergh Prize, and a special certificate for being a three-year winner of the Smarties Prize, as well as many other honors. Rowling has also been named an Officer of the British Empire.

PowerBooks Specialty Store is a full-service specialty bookstore with branches at Greenbelt 4 (tel. 7576428 to 29), Megamall (6352898 to 99), Alabang (8505662 to 63), and Glorietta (7527075).

Auditions for 'Man of La Mancha'

REPERTORY Philippines is holding auditions for its off-season musical offering this November—"Man of La Mancha" (a musical drama by Dale Wasserman, music by Mitch Leigh, lyrics by Joe Darion), on July 21.

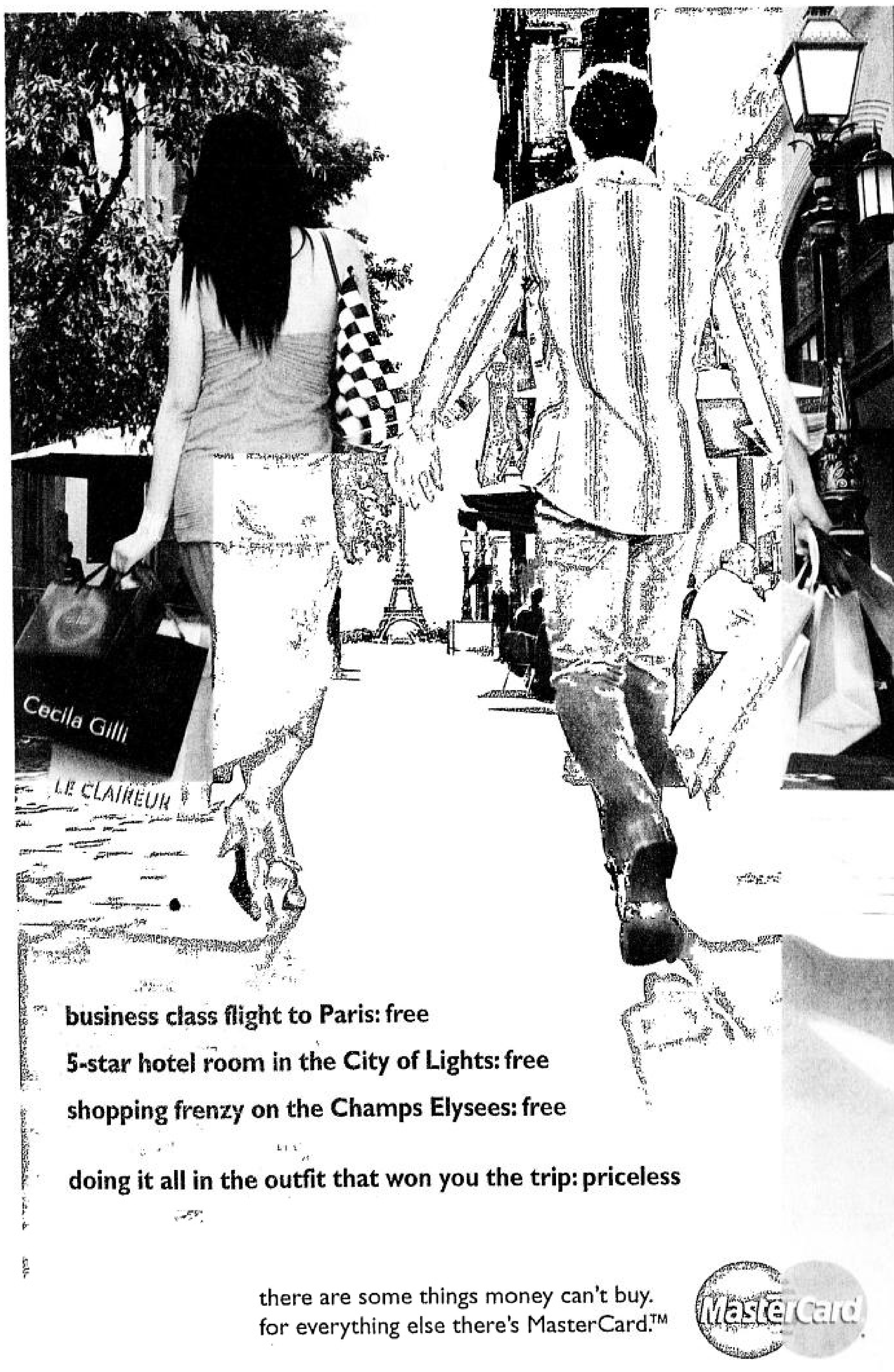
Open to all amateur and professional actors and actresses, the auditions will be held at the Repertory Philippines office at C2-A, Bldg. C, Karrivin Plaza, 2316 Pasong Tamo Ext., Makati City. Registration is at 6 p.m.

Interested parties should bring a recent 2x2 photo and a resume and should prepare a song from the musical "Man of La Mancha." Piano scores from the musical are available at the Repertory office. Cast members are expected to do both weekday and weekend shows. Rehearsals for the musical starts on September.

To be directed by theatre veteran Baby Barredo, "Man of La Mancha" will feature some of Rep's most popular veterans—Cocoy Laurel, Menchu Lauchengco-Yulo and Michael Williams. The musical features some of Broadway's most popular music including the immortal song "The Impossible Dream."

"Man of La Mancha" will run at Rep's Globe Theater at Onstage in Greenbelt 1 from Nov. 11-Dec. 18. Scheduled subscribers shows on Nov. 11, 12, Dec. 2 and 10, at 8 p.m. with 3:30 p.m. matinees on Nov. 13, 27, and Dec. 18.

Call the Repertory Philippines office at 8870710 or e-mail rep@broline.com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*Promotion runs from June 1, 2005 to October 31, 2005

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Monk's prayer gets mainstream treatment

Centering prayer, a technique to foster contemplative prayer among ordinary people, gets a boost with the visit of Trappist monk and spiritual writer Tom Keating

By Lito B. Zulueta

IS THERE room for the contemplative prayer of monks in today's helter-skelter

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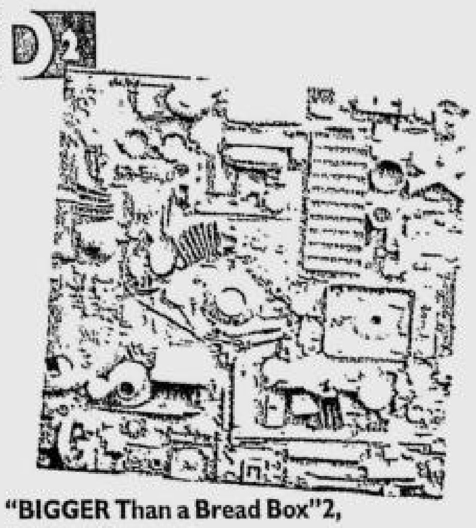
The world of monochrome



"BIGGER Than a Bread Box"2, by Juan Alcazaren

By Constantino C. Tejero

IN THE group show "Graphic Paradigms," prints, photographs and paintings have created a world that's drained of color but no less potent.

The group show features four woodcut prints on handmade paper by Pandy Aviado, five pieces in acrylic on canvas by Gerry Ingco, eight digital photographs by Richie Macapinlac and Mano de la Rosa, in The Crucible Gallery at the Artwalk, L/4, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

Each Aviado piece consists of positive-negative images in woodcut panel and proof's print.

"Pygmalion Syndrome A," for instance, has a female nude as central image with a male figure on the side, washed in slate-blue, while "Pygmalion Syndrome B" has a male nude as central figure with the female on the side, in blue-green. Here the creation myth of Pygmalion and Galatea has the creator and the created interchangeable.

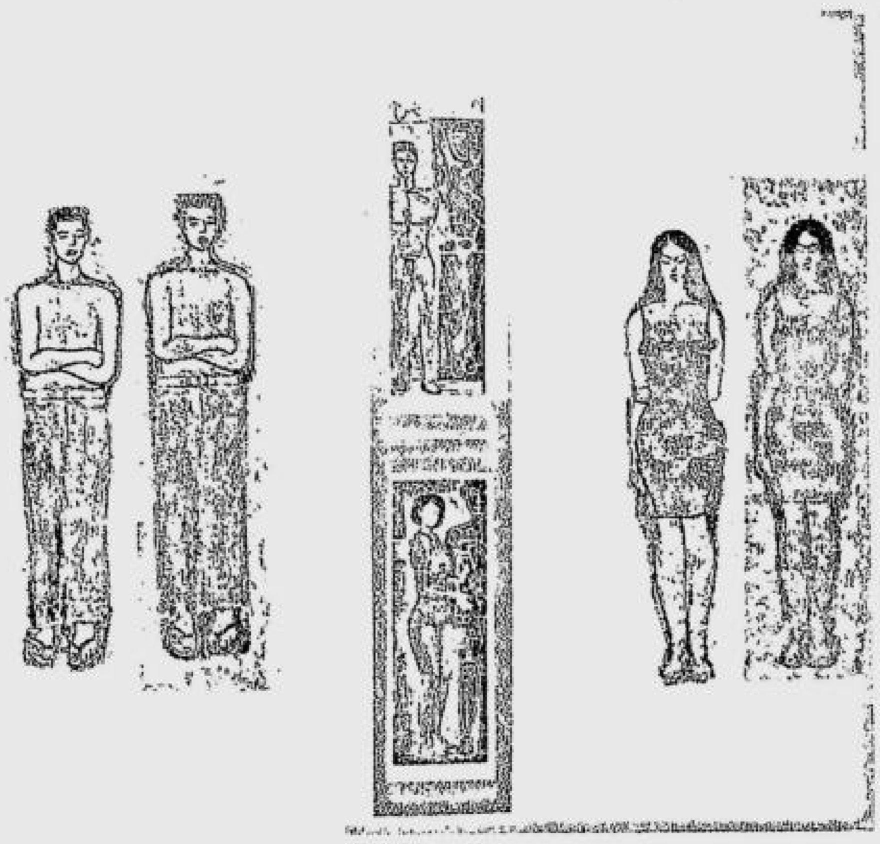
"Pinay" has a longhaired woman with downcast eyes and an arm crossed behind, while its counterpart "Pinoy" has a shirtless man with arms crossed in front, both washed in olive-green of varying tones.

Ingco's black-and-white abstractions, "Erasure" 1-5, are invariably blank but textured with a raked effect and a few calligraphic strokes.

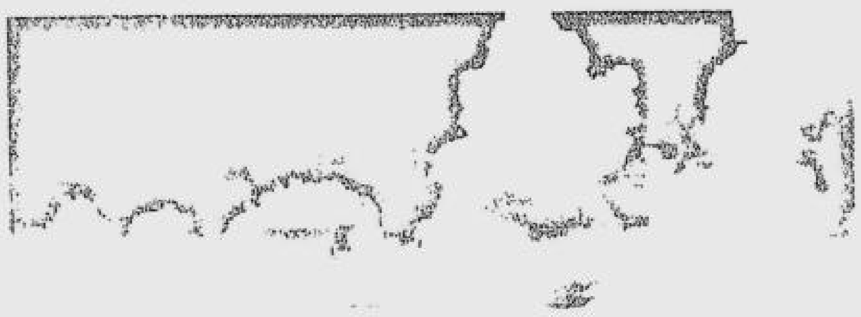
Potent imagery

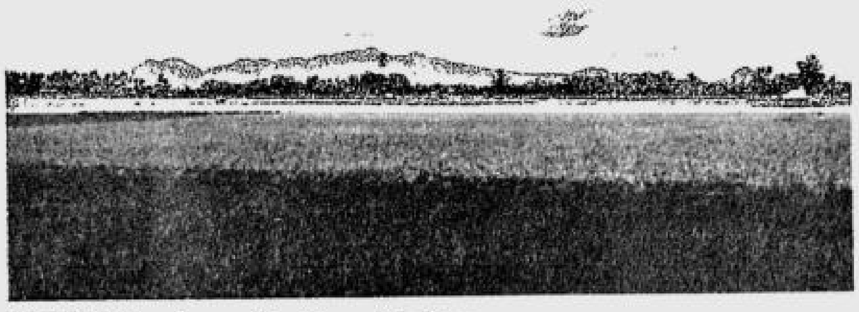
While Ingco and Aviado have been exhibiting together in recent years, Macapinlac and De La Rosa have been covering and documenting art events.

Macapinlac's "BenCab and Annie" is a portrait of the artist and his partner. "Sojourn" is a somewhat poignant image of a driftwood on the shore against a luminous sky with fishing boats on the horizon.



PRINTS by Pandy Aviado





"DAETAN Landscape," by Mano de la Rosa

"Martha's Cove" is a fish-eye view of wharf, sea and sky, while "Johnny's Woodstock" is of a boat, shore and sky.

De La Rosa's "Daetan Landscape" is of lucent clouds, mountain range and field, while "Daetan Sunrise" is seashore, sea, sky and a gleam behind the clouds.

"Daetan Artist" is a portrait of the artist Hermes Alegre on the shore. "Daetan Seascape" shows a strip of land jutting out to sea and storm clouds brewing in the sky.

From portraits to landscapes, the exhibit demonstrates that strong emotions can be generated in the viewer by chiaroscuro and expressive lines with barely a hint of color. Even without the monochromatic washes in Aviado's prints, the imagery would still be potent.

A graphic paradigm, as defined by the exhibit's note, is a framework of thought created by artworks for the viewer to understand and appreciate certain aspects of aesthetics.

Here, then, color is just supplemental to the image. Form is all.

Paradoxically, even with the utter blankness in Ingco's abstraction, emotion is still generated in the viewer. We revise that previous statement therefore: Vision is all.

Purer level

The world of monochrome extends to a neighboring gallery at the Artwalk. Here the single tone is pushed to a purer level, as white artworks blend with white walls.

We're talking of Juan Alcazaren's "Bigger Than a Bread Box," eight pieces in found materials and enamel on wood, until July 19 in West Gallery.

Alcazaren has taken quite a leap from his recent exhibits of paintings to this show of low reliefs. And we're not talking of the shift from painting to sculpture but of the sudden change from the vivid multicolor hues of the former to the severe monochrome of the latter.

These are junk the artist has accumulated through the years, toys such as a plastic corn on the cob, miniature metal horses, badminton racket, Bart Simpson figure; assorted household objects and kitchen utensils like fork and spoon, bowls and plates, cups and saucers, bread knife, soap dish, comb, coins, nails, pins, thumbtacks; office supplies and industrial discards.

The disparate objects of plastic and metal have been collaged and glued on plywood panels then painted with glossy enamel finish. Their uniform look of whiteness and even low relief notwithstanding, the pieces are individuated by their formats based on the shapes of the plywood scraps.

Each piece resembles a block of decorative concrete used in gazebos, or an architectural detail or floor installation, until one looks closer and sees the strange things stuck on it like insects on a flypaper.

Three achromics

Alcazaren took up Landscape Architecture with foundation courses in Sculpture at University of the Philippines. He received the Thirteen Artists Award from the Cultural Center of the Philippines five years ago.

Before he went into painting in recent years, his first few solo exhibits had been of sculptural pieces. This show is a swing back to that early medium and original mode of artistic expression.

"I do not want to limit my medium," he says. "*Ginagamit ko lahat, pati* video."

These pieces reflect Alcazaren's admiration for Sarah Sze, an American artist of found materials who assembles everything from aspirin tablets and paper clips to a ladder. Another artist he admires is Joseph Cornell, with his collection of assorted objects randomly arranged in a box.

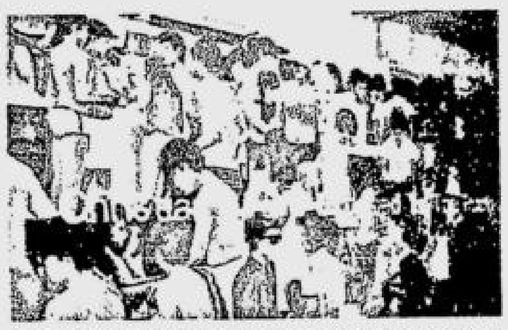
Alcazaren's are objets d'art that indict consumerism at the same time that they exalt recyclables. What's implicit in each piece, explains the artist, is for manufacturers not to produce new materials because what he needs for his art-making already exist.

His choice of white enamel is meant "to remove the history of every object." Using materials that no longer serve their original purpose, he wants viewers "to see something new and not just try to identify what look familiar to them." Thus, in each piece, old objects have acquired "new identities as pieces of a whole new composition."

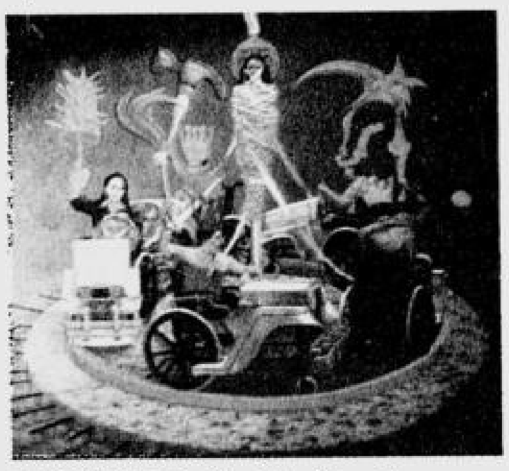
Of the three achromics, white is the most difficult to use as it is the most neutral, therefore, quite delicate to handle. Alcazaren not only uses it successfully but also handles it with flair.

'Parallel Stories' at West, Aragon at Mag:net, Lindslee at Drawing Room, Lugtu at Avellana

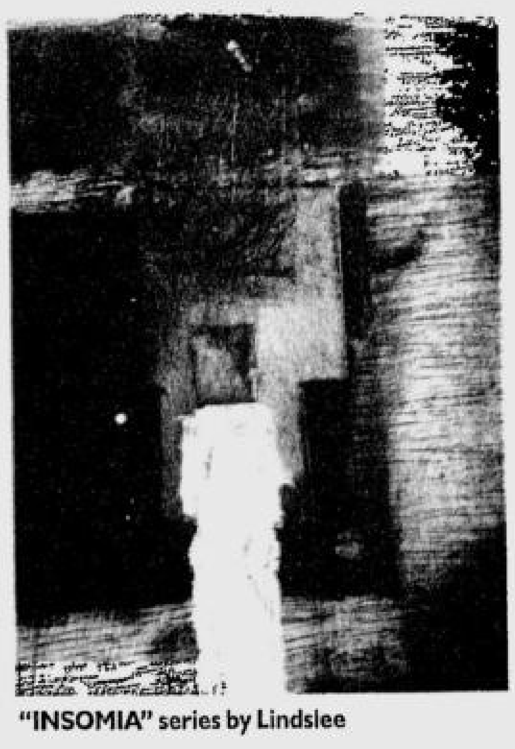
VISUAL ARTS



"CHRISTIAN Virgins Exposed to the Public," by Wire Tuazon



"SURVIVOR, P.I.," by Alfred Esquillo



"INSOMIA" series by Lindslee

WEST Gallery presents "Parallel Stories" on July 20-Aug. 2, at SM Megamall Art Center. Participating artists are Lawrence Borsoto, Alfred Esquillo, Patty Eustaquio, Nona Garcia, Geraldine Javier and Wire Tuazon. Their diverse storytelling techniques take viewers to a certain time and place. Call 6341284.

MAG:NET Gallery ABS-CBN features Amy Aragon's "Lamierda" until July 23, at The Loop, ELJ Center, ABS-CBN Compound, Eugenio Lopez St., QC. The exhibit is a pun on the act of walking leisurely and the organic excretory material.

LINDSLEE shows his small abstractions in "Anti-dote" until Aug. 6, at The Drawing Room, Metrostar Bldg., 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati. Call 8976990 or 8977877. E-mail drawing@pldt.net

AT THE AVELLANA Art Gallery are Ava Lugtu's large-format, untitled photographic reveiries. Each exalts small ordinary things—canister, pen holder, egg cradle—and pushes the visual limits of matter. The photographs' surreal beauty and haunting quality are born from the artist's careful and well-informed gradations of light, shadow and color. Studying the objects with careful eye and steady hand, the New York-trained photographer stood vigilant for the golden moment to arrive—when the visual elements converge in a single point which is the object—and clicked the shutter. Magnified tenfold, the objects can be described as photographic echo of a dream. Pure and lasting in their blurred form, Lugtu's works disrupt usual perception and mystify the imagination. Avellana Art Gallery is at A-19, 2680 F.B. Harrison St., Pasay City (fronting Gideon Academy). Call 8338357.

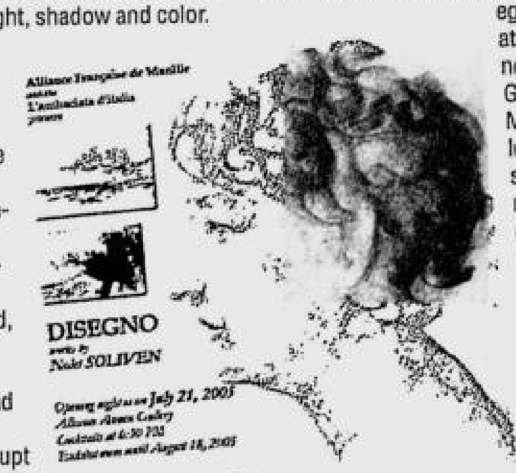
ACCUSTOMED to letting viewers figure out his works, Juan Alcazaren plays along with the 20 Question guessing game in his new show, "Bigger Than a Bread Box." On view until July 19 at the West Gallery in SM Megamall, the exhibit features the artist's latest works of found materials. Call 6341284.

THE CRUCIBLE Gallery mounts "Two Expressions of Life and Environment" by Bing Siochi and Ernie Patricio. Siochi expresses in form and multi-colored hues the foliage of his ideal environment while Patricio's somber harmony reflects in duo-dimension the spirituality of life, the angst and pain of fighting for strength and investigating deeper his malady. The exhibit opens tomorrow and runs until July 30 at SM Megamall.

JOSÉ Santos III finds that there's no better way to know the self than to go back in time. This is the recurring theme that prevails in "Times II," his latest one-man show in West Gallery, SM Megamall A on July 21-Aug. 2. The artist traces his personal history through vintage images from his grandparents' scrapbook. Call 6341284.

"DOIT" is a group exhibit extrapolating on the idea of drawing, both as a cognitive process and as a consequence of such process. Participating artists are Lyle Buencamino, Patrick de Veyra, Winner Jumalon, Carl Loquias, Mervin Malonzo, Jaco Payawal, Hanna Pettyjohn and Ian Quirante. The exhibit runs until Aug. 12 at Mag:net Gallery on Katipunan, QC.

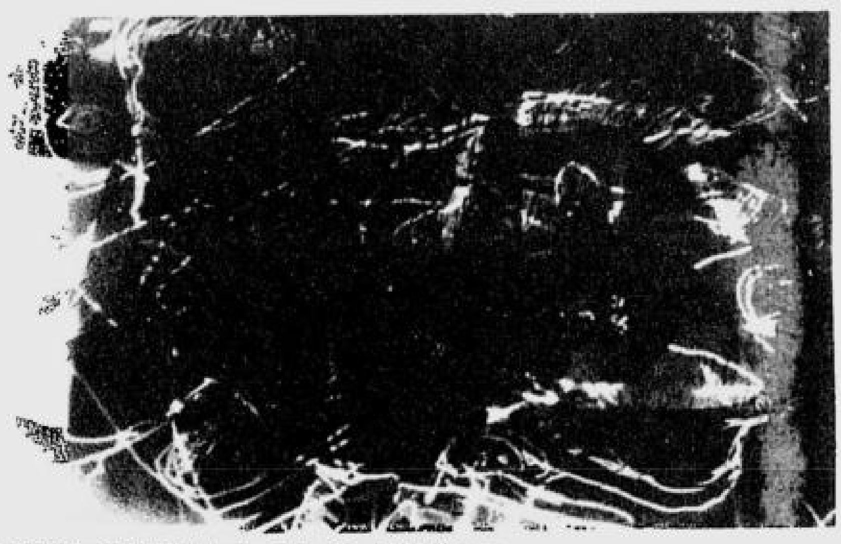
ALLIANCE Française presents Nolet Soliven's "Disegno" on July 21-Aug. 19, at Annex Gallery, LRI Business Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia St., Bel-Air II, Makati. The show is a collection of drawings and studies inspired by the Renaissance and Baroque art of Florence and its classical sculptures and architecture. Call 8957585 or 8957441.



"DISEGNO," by Nolet Soliven

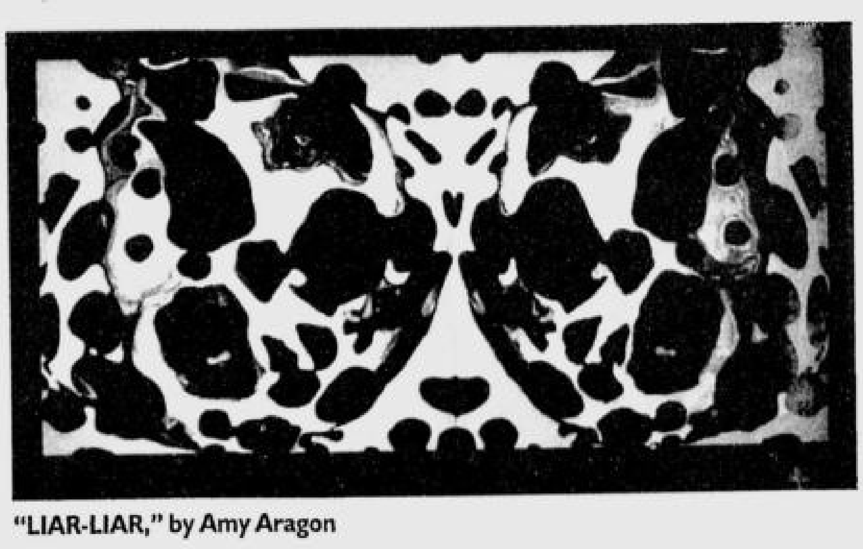
FERNANDO Sena will exhibit his still life and landscape paintings in two venues: "Merienda Sena" on the G/L, Paseo Center, Paseo de Roxas Ave. cor. Sedeño St., Makati, on July 28-Aug. 12; and "Senario," 4/L, Cinema Lobby, Citywalk 2, Eastwood City, Libis, QC, Aug. 1-15.

METROPOLITAN Museum of Manila opens "Artes at Angkan: Power, Patronage and Production in 19th-Century Philippines" on Aug. 4, at the Museum's Tall Galleries. The exhibit will showcase an extensive collection of artworks and objects that would illustrate the lives, passions and preoccupations of life in 19th-century Manila. Call 5211517 or 5361566.



"TWENTY-TWO Eulogies," by Patrick de Veyra

MANNY Baldemor poses with art collector Joyce Wong with his "Philippine Art Scenes" scroll at Contemporary Filipino Artists Exhibition 2005 held i City Hall, Hong Kong, presented by Philippine Association of Hong Kong.



"LIAR-LIAR," by Amy Aragon

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THE SATURDAY Group "37" participating artists

Saturday Group holds anniversary show

TO MARK its 37th year of camaraderie among painters and service to Philippine culture, the Saturday Group of Artists shows "37" up to July 21 at the Artwalk on the 4th floor of the Megamall.

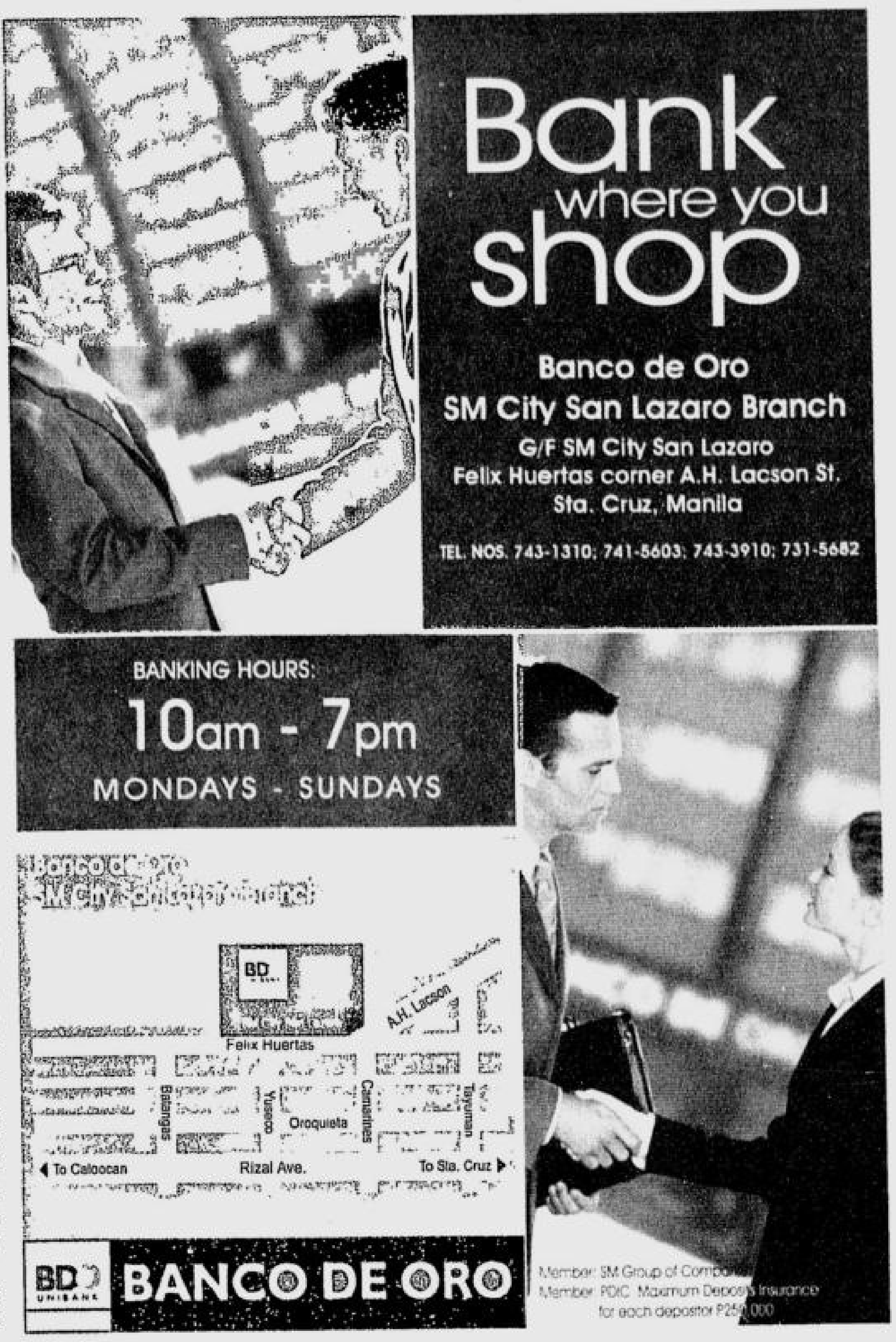
This year's anniversary exhibit is special. Said Saturday Group president Buds Convocar explains: "For our annual shows, we don't usually dream up a theme. What we do is impose size parameters—like, last year, we did triptychs in common sizes, and this year, it is 16" x 16" canvases. It's like a challenging game. We like to see how each individual artist will handle the constraints and limitations. The practical advantage is we can visualize ahead how the layout will work in the gallery. It's not easy handling the number of artworks for a group show like this."

The Saturday Group regulars—who include such renowned painters as Mauro "Malang" Santos, Cris Cruz, Lydia Velasco and Fernando Sena, among others—are joined by guest artists, all friends of the Group, including Cid Reyes, Coby Cruz, Lascano, Edwin Wilwayco, Pandy Aviado, Fil dela Cruz, Fidel Sarmiento and Romulo Olazo.

According to Group chairman Cris Cruz, "We are much satisfied with the making of the collection. Though each member has full control of his own style and theme, there is a lot of collaboration and discussion at the weekly group discussions. I am very happy with the results of our sessions, and the viewers can see that in the artworks on display."

Group director Lydia Velasco echoes Cruz's enthusiasm. In the end, she says, the Saturday Group is as much about camaraderie as artmaking: "We are a very closely knit group. It is so much like a family—we have little spats and heated discussions sometimes but that is nothing compared to the fun we have together. At the end of the day, it is this spirit of camaraderie that keeps the Saturday Group alive."

"37" is presented by Crucible Gallery, and sponsored by French Baker.



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'Swan Lake' to be staged

THE PHILIPPINE Ballet Theatre (PBT) presents the classic masterpiece "Swan Lake" at the CCP Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo on July 21-24.

To be restaged by PBT's Russian ballet master Anatoli Panassioukov after Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov's choreography, the ballet will feature the company's lead dancers Abigail Tan, Katherine Sanchez, Ronilo Jaynario and Jared Jehowil Tan alternating in the lead roles. This will be the first time these four will be performing "Swan Lake" with the company.

Panassioukov has been PBT's resident ballet master since 1995 and, together with artistic director Gener Caringal, is responsible for honing the skills and talents of the company's dancers.

Call the CCP Box Office at 832-3704, 832-1125 loc. 1400 to 1407 and 1409; TicketWorld at 891-9999, 891-5610; or the Philippine Ballet Theater at 632-8848, 634-2763. Students are entitled to a 50-percent discount, and seniors 20-percent. E-mail the PBT at pbt_ccp@yahoo.com.

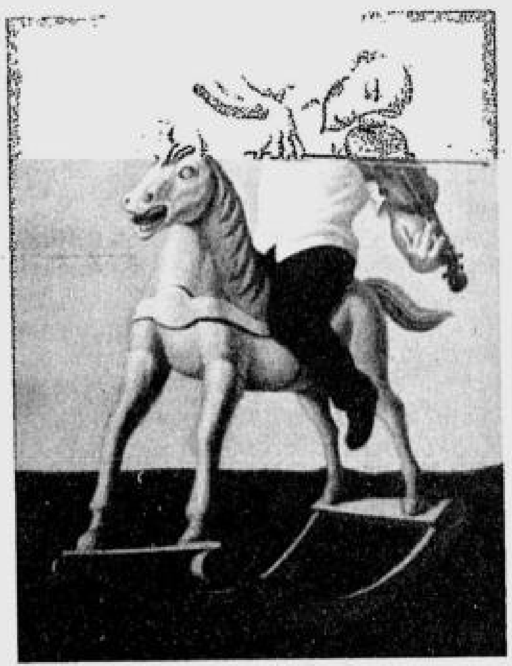

ILLUSTRATION by Elmer Borlongan

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'Imperial Collection' at Joaquin-Podium

ARTIST Von Ng's much-awaited show "Imperial Collection" opens July 22 at Galerie Joaquin Podium at 7 p.m. The show runs until August 2.

The solo show features 30 works by Ng inspired by treasures of Asian culture. In the show, he expresses his fixation with ancient Asia through the use of color and texture. The works are also based on the five major elements, namely earth, wind, water, fire and metal.

The paintings are composed and executed to produce harmony among the various elements.

Ng lived in Canada for seven years and in Los Angeles for three. He is a martial arts expert and a practitioner of Kyokushin karate. He utilizes many of the concepts behind Kyokushin, particularly the necessity of rigid training and repetitions of movements, in his art. His other influences are Chinese swordplay, Chinese calligraphy, architecture and Zen philosophy. In many of his works he attempts to intersperse abstract art with ancient Chinese calligraphy. Although he had been drawing since childhood, he was into realism and hyperrealism for much of his career until recently when he broke away from figurative art.

Galerie Joaquin-Podium is located at Unit B12-B13, Lower Ground Level, The Podium, ADB Ave., Ortigas Ave., Mandaluyong City. Call 634-7954, e-mail galerie_joaquin@yahoo.com or visit www.galeriejoaquin.com.

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Philippine ivory craft is part of world art history

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F Villalon

"POWER + Faith + Image: 16th-19th Century Philippine Art in Ivory" is one of the inaugural exhibits at the new Ayala Museum.

To mark the milestone exhibit, the museum organized an international symposium, "Manila, World Entrepot," on July 8-10 in which foreign and Filipino scholars read papers on the Philippine ivory trade and 19th-century Philippine watercolor images.

The Ayala Foundation published "Power Faith Image" (2004), co-authored by Regalado Trota José and Ramón Villegas, a superb publication documenting the exhibition and tracing religious sculpture in ivory as an art form where the Philippines excelled globally during the Spanish colonial period.

The exhibit, curated by José and Villegas, is an exceptional exhibition which gathers the largest, most significant assemblage of mostly privately owned ivories, never exhibited in public. On view are 400 examples of rare Philippine ivory sculptures that establish beyond doubt the prominence of Philippine ivory sculpture in world art history.

The exhibition presents a sumptuous overview of the virtually unappreciated excellence of Philippine creativity that, while unknown to many today, of world-renowned during the Spanish colonial era.

"The Philippine ivory tradition surpassed that of any other country for its range, scope and sheer volume," write the authors. Since 1590, artisans in the Chinese district of Manila carved Christian images in ivory, prized and venerated in palaces, cathedrals, churches and monasteries in Europe and the Americas.

Christian imagery carved by Philippine craftsmen blended Oriental features along Western models. A characteristic is the expression of meditative calm in the Buddhist tradition that ranges "from an inscrutable stare to an incipient smile" articulated in all carved Philippine *santos*.

Eventually Philippine stylistic elements made their way into Indo-Portuguese ivories carved in Sri Lanka and India. Studies prove that "the Philippine Madonna and Child became the model for the Kuan-yin," the Chinese deity of mercy, and not the other way around as previously thought.

Evolution of forms

Basic forms evolved in ivory carving. A complete figure, whether completely of ivory or of ivory parts (usually head and hands) mounted on a fully carved wooden body, were called *de bulto* (origin of *rebulto*, Filipino for "statue").

Statues with ivory head and hands attached to an open conical framework to be covered with a dress were called *de bastidor*.

Some wooden statues had ivory faces that in reality were frontal masks fitted into wooden heads.

Religious scenes, called reliefs, carved into flat pieces of wood were often fitted with ivory details. Elaborate miniature tableaux of religious scenes sometimes combining ivory with glass, gold and precious stones were kept under *virinas* (glass covers).

Ivory was a precious object of prestige and luxury, often shown off by occupying the place of honor in a church or private home, dressed in lavishly embroidered silks and often embellished with gold, silver and precious stones.

The glory days of ivory, the exhibition implies, are of the past.

Ivory statues, now rarely seen in churches, have mostly been destroyed, vandalized or stolen. The best examples are in private collections, away from public view.

Ivory is not for the everyday. It is a ritual object. The ultimate moment of an ivory *santo* is when it is borne in procession. "Only when dressed in gorgeous robes… can Ivory images be seen in their best context: They are borne by believers on paths of Power, Faith and Art."

The international ivory trade was among the primary topics during the conference, which focused on linkages resulting from the exchange of objects and influences between the Philippines, Asia, Europe and the Americas during the Spanish colonial era.

Globalization

Papers read by Benito Legarda and Fernando Zialcita affirm that the galleon trade starting in 1565 that continued for most of the Spanish regime was the world's longest-running international trade route, opening a process of globalization.

Once a year, galleons plied the Manila-Acapulco route carrying products not only from the Philippines but also from all over Asia. Goods were exchanged, and so were cultural influences.

Because of the galleon trade, Zialcita said, two cultural waves met in Manila. One began in the Mediterranean, crossed the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia to the Philippines. Another wave began on the Atlantic coast of Europe, swept the opposite direction through the Americas and the Pacific toward the Philippines.

Both waves ended in the Philippines where they met other cultures, the Philippine, Chinese and the Japanese, making the Philippines "the only true end-point in the world," as Zialcita quotes French historian Pierre Chaunu.

Diverse cultures fused at the "end point" of the world. Manila festivals were so cosmopolitan that in 1611 entries to a poetry contest were submitted in Latin, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Basque, Castillian, Mexican, Tagalog and Visayan.

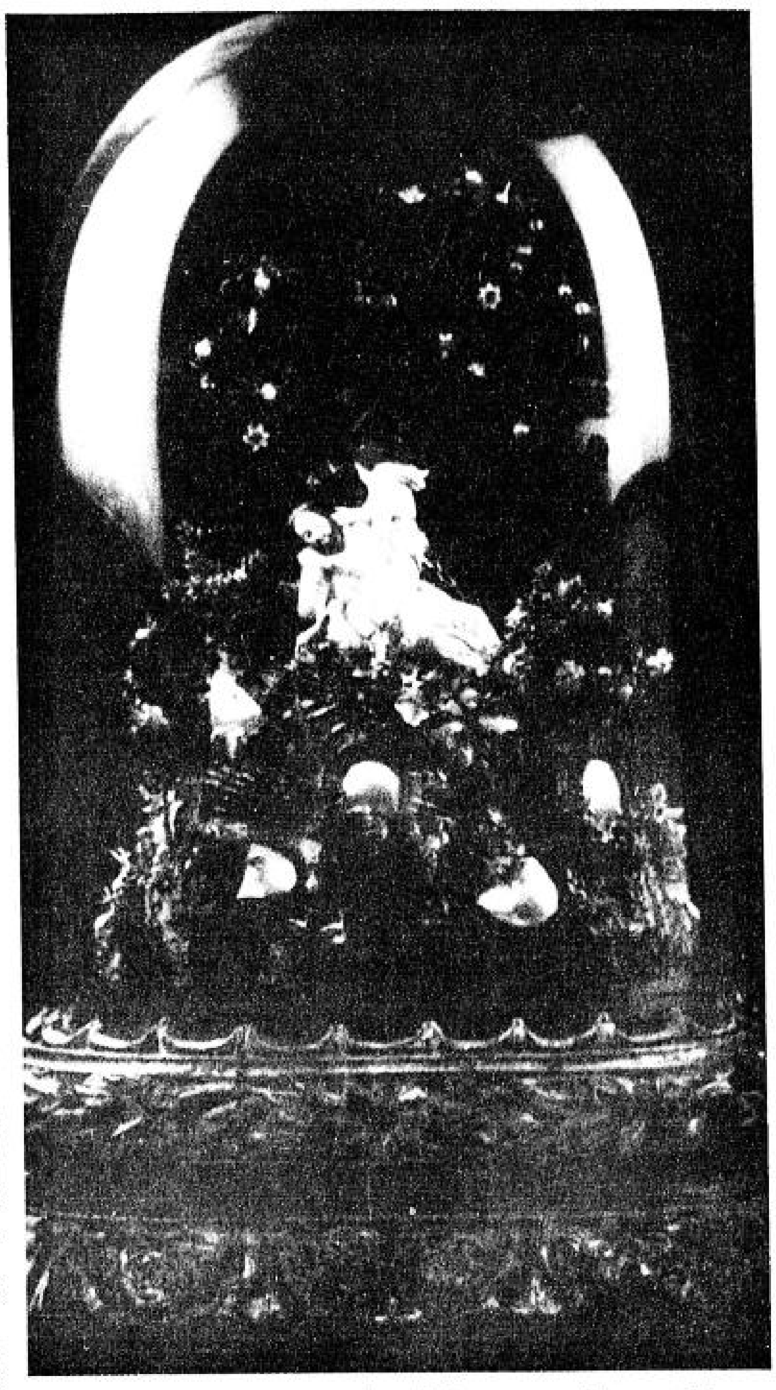
Philippine culture traveled to other parts of the world as well. Mangoes crossed the ocean to Mexico, where the fruit is still called *mango de Manila*. Vegetables cooked in coconut are called *guinatan* on the west coast of Mexico.

Philippine export items of prestige, however, were definitely the ivory figures venerated and honored in churches, monasteries and homes in the New World and in Spain, objects that are just beginning to capture the attention of international scholars who recognize them an important international development from the Philippines, significant in the East-West fusion of art traditions.

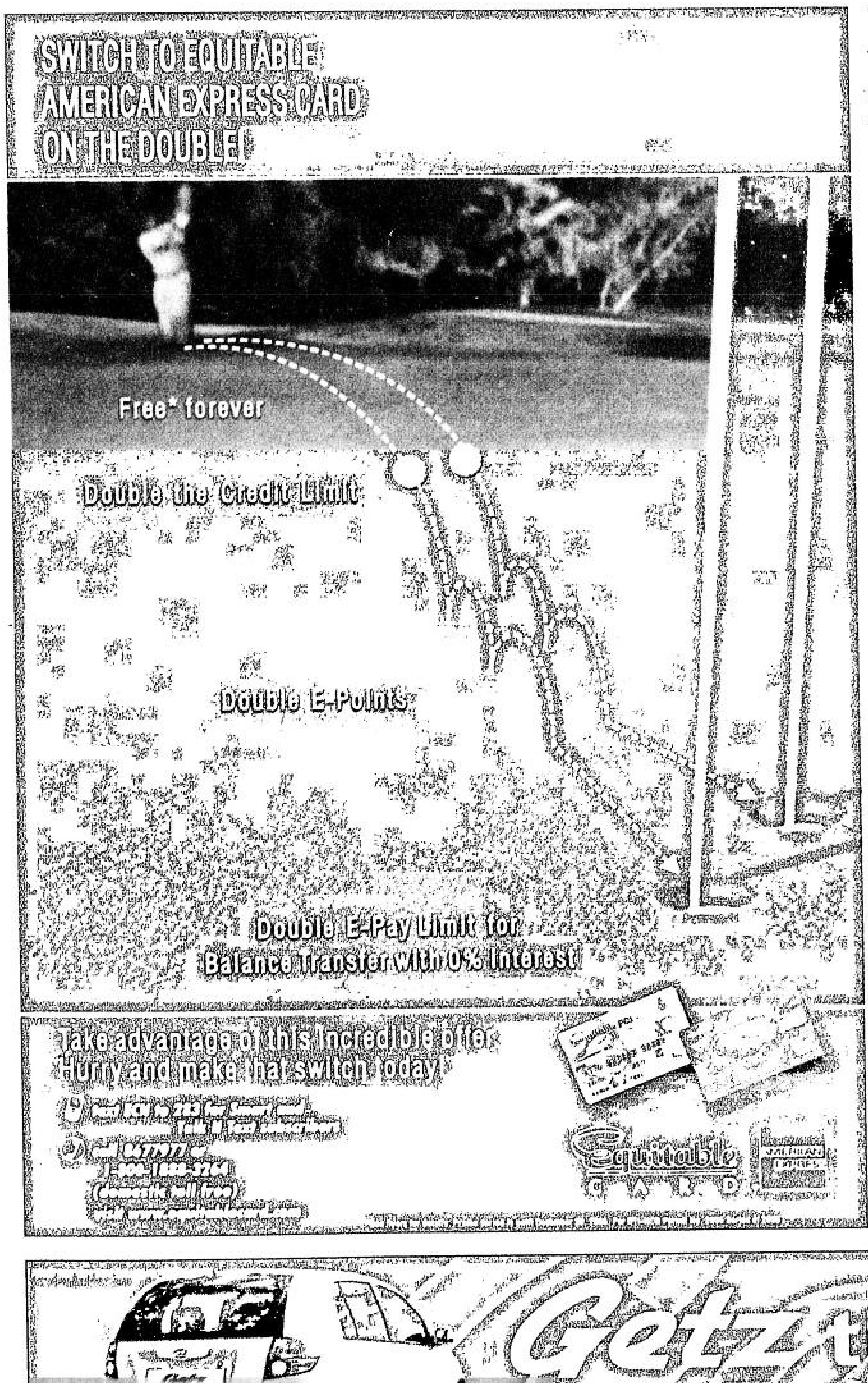
"Human achievements also matter," writes Zialcita.

The exhibition, publication and international conference prove that religious ivory is a human achievement of the Philippines that does matter. They are proof of Philippine excellence.

E-mail feedback to afvillalon@hotmail.com.



UNIQUE to the Philippines are late-19th-century miniature tableaux of biblical scenes covered by a glass virina whose main figures are of ivory with background combining glass beads, precious metals and stones and other material. PHOTO COURTESY OF AYALA MUSEUM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Monk's prayer gets . . .

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world?

Fr. Thomas Keating seems to think so. For several years now, the American Trappist monk has been promoting "centering prayer," a method that cultivates the habit of contemplative prayer among lay people. Contemplative prayer may sound Greek to many people, but to Fr. Keating, there's nothing arcane about it.

"It is the opening of the mind and heart—our whole being—to God, the ultimate mystery," he said. "We open our awareness to God whom we know by faith is within us. Centering prayer is a method of refining one's intuitive faculties so that one can enter more easily into contemplative prayer."

In short, contemplative prayer is not for monks only.

Filipinos will have a taste of contemplative prayer when Fr. Keating comes to Manila this week to hold a one-day recollection on July 23 at Every Nation Leadership Institute in For Bonifacio, Makati. The "prayer rally" is organized by Contemplative Outreach Philippines (tel. 8420201, 8438292, 8438830, or 8438970), which has been promoting centering prayer in the country for 15 years now.

Sacred word

Centering prayer seeks to popularize contemplative prayer. It seeks to democratize the prayer usually associated with monks by removing it from the monasteries and releasing it to the world. It consists of the would-be contemplative choosing a sacred word, like *God, Lord, Jesus, Abba,* and *Father,* and sitting herself comfortably, focusing her mind on the word, taking care to banish extraneous ideas or disturbances.

This prayer of intense concentration—of centering—basically makes the soul bask in God's presence. It essentially uses the natural—the mind, the word or concept that becomes the focus of the mind, the stillness and comfort of the surroundings—in order to pierce the supernatural.

"A new world appears within and around us and the impossible becomes an everyday experience," said Fr. Keating.

There's nothing enigmatic or "mystical" about contemplative prayer, argued its local champions, such as Lita Salinas, Tata Poblador, Nancy Tambunting and Chuchi Daroy, the women behind Contemplative Outreach.

"Fr. Keating believes that contemplative prayer is for all, not only for monks or the religious," said Salinas. "Prayer is awareness of God, Who is already here, in our midst." She explained that centering prayer merely reinforces awareness of God's presence by silence, stillness, and training the mind like a spotlight on the reality of that presence.

Fr. Keating may be a member of an ancient Catholic monastic order whose particular charisms are silence and a life of prayer, but let not that dampen you into trying contemplative prayer. The Trappist monk, in fact, believes that Christianity is a contemplative religion, and Christians, therefore, should be contemplatives. Since the 1980s, the former abbot of the Trappist monastery in Colorado, USA, has been sharing that insight.

Regularity

Like monastic living, centering prayer requires regularity, Salinas said. The phrase "prayer life" assumes a literal significance when one considers that any one who tries centering prayer must set aside at least 20 minutes a day to perform the ritual.

The discipline should foster the habit so that in due time centering prayer becomes a virtue, a positive habit as against the negative habit of, say, being busy just for the sake of being busy. If monks are contemplatives inside the abbeys, then lay people are contemplatives in the world.

Some people may think centering prayer is a mere rehash of New Age quietism. This is not true. It remains a sound Christian practice since it is ultimately based on the Scriptures.

In particular, centering prayer is a takeoff from the Lectio Divina ("divine reading"), which combines scriptural readings and prayers and governs the hours of the religious orders such as the Trappists and Cistercians and even "active" orders like the Dominicans and Franciscans.

In short, centering prayer is a reflection on the Word of God on a more intense, highly concentrated level.

The biblical moorings of centering prayer should dovetail with the new Catholic emphasis on the Bible. Centering prayer is biblically sound.

In the end, the effect of centering prayer can be detected in the person. It improves the self, simplifying it, removing the dross that comes with selfishness and trivial pursuits.

"It is a call to follow Jesus out of all the structures, security blankets, and even spiritual practices that serve as props. They are all left behind insofar as they are part of the false self system. The false self is an illusion," Fr. Keating said.

The false self shed, a new person emerges, a person centered not on self or the world, but on God.